New Statesman

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TUC: realistic or right-wing?

Beatrix Campbell on sex, class & politics

# WHERE IS THE NEW WORKING CLASS?

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**New Statesman**

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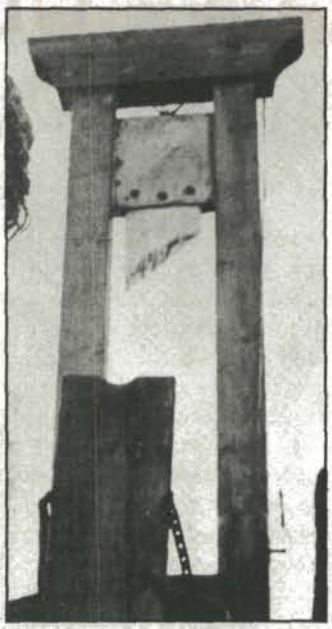

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SRI LANKA
THOUSANDS NOW DESTITUTE

Horrifying violence in Sri Lanka has left a trail of chaos and destruction all over the island.
Oxfam Field Workers have now completed a full tour and report that thousands have fled their homes. They are camping with relatives, on the streets or in refuges – in fear of their lives.
Homes have been ruthlessly burned and looted. Lives have been shattered.
The sheer ferocity of the violence in this once beautiful island is shocking.

**Shocking destruction**
With so many homeless there is an urgent need for food, clothing, shelter and household utensils.
Oxfam has already sent £60,000 in grants. This has been distributed by our staff in the field to Lions Clubs, Rotaries and Churches in Kandy, Matale, Jaffna and Trincomalee. They are doing all they can.

**Your help is needed**
But with funds already desperately short, Oxfam urgently needs to send more money.
With thousands of people still homeless the needs are enormous. We need your help. Please send a donation to help buy food, clothing and shelter.
Send any gift – whatever you can afford – to help the innocent people of Sri Lanka, so scarred by this violence. Please do it today.

I enclose a donation for the destitute in Sri Lanka for
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New Statesman Vol 106 No 2739 16 September 1983

# Dr Owen in charge but not in control

A SUCCESSFUL political coup was confirmed this week in Salford. David Owen is for the time being at least in total control of the central organs of the Social Democratic Party. The once influential Jenkinsite clique have been elbowed out with a speed and thoroughness that few would have thought possible three months ago. The changeover is not reflected in any markedly different policy commitments. Owen is more passionately in favour of deploying cruise missiles in the United Kingdom than his predecessor and less interested in any commitment to a formal incomes policy. But that is about the size of it. And Owen has no more idea than Jenkins about a distinctive political and philosophical *strategy* for the Social Democrats. No, the difference is all over political tactics and style. And here the smoke signals from Salford are clear.

The Jenkins concept of the Alliance between the SDP and the Liberals was that the constituent parts should move towards a merger as soon as possible. The SDP was a political waiting room where those who wanted to break the mould of the two-party political system (and were not already Liberals) gathered in preparation for the great event. Future joint selection of Alliance candidates has, since the general election, become the stalking horse of the Mergerist Tendency within the SDP. Last Saturday on the eve of his conference, Owen won a solid 17 to 10 majority in the SDP national committee in favour of a motion rejecting joint candidate selection and this view was overwhelmingly endorsed by the conference the following day. Owen had made 'doing it my way' an issue of confidence in his leadership and the tactic worked – at least in Salford. His way consists of seeking to emphasise differences with the Liberals, often in hostile terms. 'I see certain anarchical tendencies in the Liberal Party which makes it difficult for them to stand firm on key issues', he said in a pre-Salford interview. After Salford, it was made clear to lobby correspondents that Owen no longer thinks it necessary to consult the other three members of the old Gang of Four before important events or decisions. The Owen one-man-band is certainly trying to play a new tune.

WILL THE NEW tune catch on? It is a critical question for the Labour Party and the Left. It is easy enough to guy the SDP for what it is – a party with 'no roots, no principles, no philosophy and no values' in search of an electorate. It is easy to score points off its new leader for the opportunistic manner in which he has faced to the left when he wanted to distinguish himself from Roy Jenkins and is now facing to the right to pick up Tory voters for his party. But for all this, the fact has to be faced that the Liberal/SDP Alliance is within striking distance of replacing Labour as the second most popular political grouping in the country. The SDP did not disintegrate when the ludicrously inflated euphoria of its first year exploded. The Alliance's continuing performance both in the opinion polls and in local authority by-election results must be a source of deep concern to Labour. If in next year's EEC elections the Alliance polls a higher share of the popular vote than Labour, the effect on politics between now and the next general election could be very dramatic. For if the Alliance became generally established in the popular mind as the most likely alternative to another Tory victory, it would suddenly be Labour and not the Alliance parties that would suffer from the squeeze on third parties that is built into our electoral system.

So some comfort can be drawn from the fact that David Owen has painted himself into quite a small political corner. The Owenite faction at the top of the SDP may see advantage in trying to put off any further serious talk of a merger with the Liberals at least until after the next election. But, as their rank and file know from direct experience, such a policy will soon cause serious practical and political problems. When the SDP was founded, the general assumption (shared then by Owen) was that an ad hoc electoral pact would get a Liberal/SDP alliance up to the 1983 general election; but that unless as a result of that election proportional representation could be negotiated firmly onto the political agenda, the two parties would have no option but to move closer thereafter. The logic behind that assumption holds just as good today. The two parties would simply cut each other's throats if they ran candidates against each other in the same constituency. But how can two parties co-exist in the same constituency, if one of them is barred for ever from putting up, or even selecting, a candidate?

The political problem is just as acute. If the two parties are to present themselves credibly together to the electorate at the next election, they will have to work out together joint policies and a joint manifesto. Unless they propose simply to spatchcock together some document drawn from separate manifestos, this process can only be achieved by some merging of their respective political sovereignties. But in his search for his own political identity, this is precisely what Owen seems to have set his face against. In fact it would be a reasonable prediction to say that the Alliance in its present form will not be able to hold together between now and the next general election if the complete stop on moves towards closer relations implied by the resolutions of Salford is maintained.

But if David Owen's personal ambitions for himself and his party (and David Steel's troubles with his Liberals) mean that the forward march of the Alliance as a political concept has for the time being halted, it still remains true that the fortunes of the rootless SDP depend mainly on the actions of others. Thatcherism offers Owen his opening to the right. But it will be the success or failure of the Kinnock counter-attack from the left that will decide the doctor's fate. □



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# Publisher tries to 'privatise' defence list

SECURITY OFFICIALS in the Ministry of Defence have become alarmed at the prospect of the KGB being able to purchase dial-up directories of everyone working in the Whitehall headquarters or other British military establishments, simply by presenting their American Express Card. The reason for their concern is an attempt by Mr Robert Maxwell, the controversial Oxford-based director of Pergamon Press, to privatise publication of the Ministry's internal directories and personnel lists.

In the last few weeks, Mr Maxwell's personal representatives – including the Conservative MP and former Cabinet Minister Geoffrey Rippon, and Rear Admiral Hilary Goodhart, CB – have attempted to call on Secretary of State Michael Heseltine in order to overcome MoD officials' 'foot-dragging', according to complaints in a private memorandum written by Admiral Goodhart. Copies of the memorandum, and other Pergamon documents, have been passed to the *New Statesman*.

The 'foot-dragging . . . security people' identified by Admiral Goodhart as resisting the Maxwell proposal are concerned that handing all their internal directories to the computers of an outside agency would make the ministry vulnerable to easy electronic espionage. At the root of their fears may be the Czech-born Mr Maxwell's controversial career. Last week, he was in Moscow to receive an honorary doctorate from Moscow State University. He was also the western publisher of Leonid Brezhnev's autobiography. In the late 1960s, in the wake of the first collapse of his Pergamon empire, he was severely criticised for his conduct by Department of Trade investigators and declared not to be a fit person to run a public company (although he later established before the High Court that he had been denied natural justice in the way that this verdict was reached).

In fact, Pergamon's motives in trying to privatise MoD directories are perfectly clear, and indeed entirely in accordance with current Conservative thinking. Pergamon Press want to make money out of the government information they would get from the Defence Ministry, by producing their own private directories as a lucrative sideline. Privatising the whole Ministry of Defence operation would be the best way to do this – and win a captive publicly-funded market at the same time.

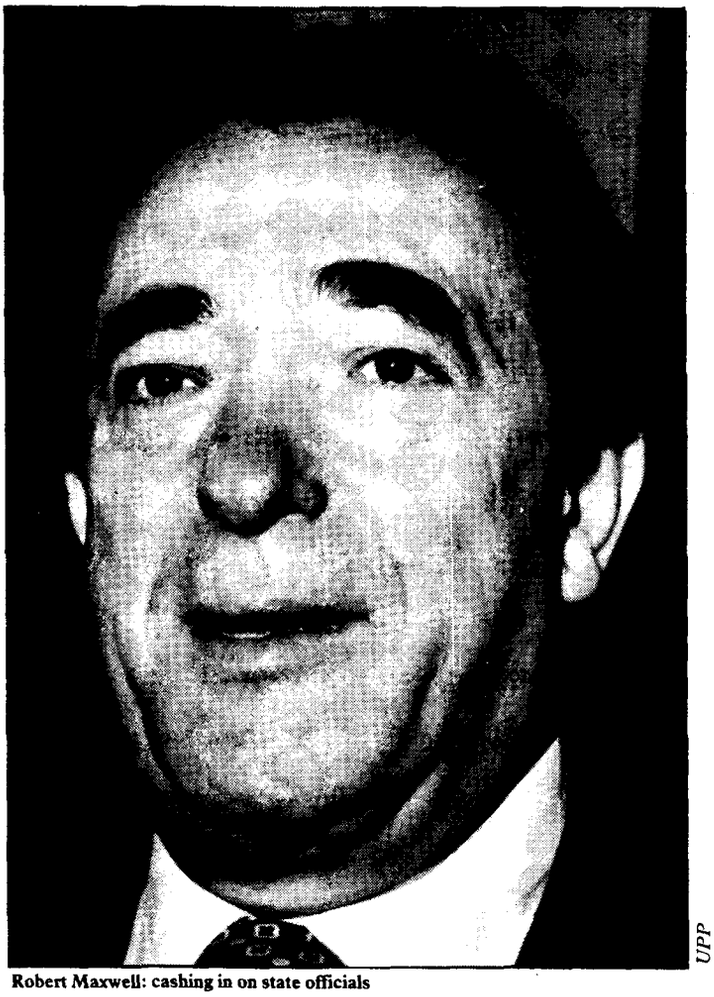
Pergamon quietly began producing private directories of Ministry of Defence personnel in March 1982. Their 'British Defence Directory' now costs £150 a year for four issues, covering the Ministry of Defence, Army, Navy, Air Force and 'NATO Command'. It is published by a Pergamon subsidiary, Brassey's.

Over 100 military manufacturers and other firms subscribe to the Directory, which is intended to help salesmen 'target' suitable officials to approach in the hope of selling military equipment: 'A complete index gives the current post of known contacts'. Included in the Directory is an offer of 'mailing list facilities – names and addresses of target personnel can be selected and printed out' on request by Pergamon's databank computers. It is intended for 'all who need up-to-date and accurate access to the Defence Establishment'. Copies can be ordered using all well-known credit cards, including American Express.

In November 1982, Geoffrey Rippon wrote to then Defence Secretary John Nott, to advertise Brassey's 'new publishing development' and asked that Nott should 'have your officals look into the feasibility of contracting out the maintenance, updating and production of some, or all of your directories and telephone lists . . . one of our associate companies has already been MoD and HMSO security cleared at a high level.'

Armed Forces Under-Secretary Jerry Wiggin replied to Rippon that the proposal was 'interesting', but offered no immediate action. But although they didn't say so, what Brassey's were really wanting was to get inside information about MoD staff positions and movements. In a memorandum to Rippon (who is Chairman of Brassey's) last month, Admiral Goodhart explained that, despite Rippon's boast to John Nott of using 'the latest computer technology and automated production facilities', Brassey's were running into difficulties: 'Compilation and updating of the Directory continues to be difficult. The MoD . . . is not prepared to make available the . . . information'.

When Goodhart offered to allow the MoD to 'sanitise' Brassey's Directory subscribers' list in return for getting the latest information, security officials appeared unconvinced that this would keep their secrets away from an appreciative local KGB *Rezidentura*. Indeed, a copy has already been supplied to the *New Statesman*.



UPP

**Robert Maxwell: cashing in on state officials**

The MoD has appointed an internal working party to investigate automating the production of the bulky lists of all officers in the three armed services, which are still produced twice annually. But a representative seemed horrified at the idea of privatising their information lists last week. He was sure that no 'official' meeting had taken place between Rippon and Heseltine. Maxwell's Pergamon Press continues to believe that it is 'ideally placed to take on privatisation of the MoD Directories'.

**Duncan Campbell**

# Trouble over union dues

BIRMINGHAM'S Conservative Council has withdrawn 'check-off' facilities for its NALGO employees, thereby terminating a practice which has existed since the 1960s and been of benefit to both employers and union.

The system involves union dues being deducted at source directly from salaries by the employer and passed as a lump sum to the union involved: 70 per cent of all dues are now paid in this manner, 99 per cent in the case of NALGO, saving shop stewards and members working time from the task of gathering small sums of money.

The decision followed a three-week strike inside the city's social services department last year when 33 NALGO members defied their union and continued working. When agreement was reached between NALGO and the Council Leader, Neville Bosworth, a clause pledged that there would be 'no victimisation on either side'.

The local NALGO Executive then wrote to the 33 asking them to explain their actions; 24 of them promptly resigned from the union. NALGO maintains that when it signed the 'no victimisation' clause it told the employers that it could not by-pass its own rules and would have to hold a hearing concerning the non-strikers.

Councillor Bosworth sees the union actions as victimisation and unilaterally tore up the 1972 Check-Off agreement. NALGO warned that the removal of such facilities would cost the Council about £90,000 in lost time, but Bosworth replied that anyone taking time off to collect subs would face disciplinary action.

**Nancy Evans**



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# Guarding the Liberal purse

SENIOR LIBERALS are worried that the biggest embarrassment to the party leadership at Harrogate next week will not come from any resolution on policy, or debate about who decides what goes in the manifesto, or even the various fringe meetings to be addressed by David Owen and Ken Livingstone, among others. What exercises them even more is who will take charge of the party's finances.

The Liberals have two treasurers. For the past six years they have been Lord Lloyd of Kilgerran, a barrister, and Munroe Palmer, a chartered accountant. Both are now stepping down. Three pairs of aspirant treasurers are competing to fill the shoes once occupied by Jeremy Thorpe. The 'establishment' pair are Hugh Jones, the party's retiring Secretary-General, and Anthony Jacobs, chairman of the British School of Motoring.

Jones and Jacobs are being challenged by Chris Fox, a chartered accountant, and Sir Trevor Jones – 'Jones the vote' – the leader of the Liberal group on Liverpool city council. Jones's controversial business interests and method of running Liverpool (the Liberals ran Liverpool for some years before being voted out last May), have been a continuing source of irritation to the party leadership. Much of the last-minute friction between the Liberals and Social Democrats over seat allocation for June's general election occurred in Jones's domain.

Jones's opponents question not only the financial judgments he and Fox would bring to the post of treasurer; they fear he would use the post, as Thorpe once did, to appear on national media and make unwelcome pronouncements 'as Liberal treasurer'.

The third pair, Rob Wheyway and Brian Lomax, both from Coventry, are regarded as rank outsiders. So David Steel and his closest friends are hoping that the typical Liberal delegate's natural distrust of establishments will manifest itself on defence, or the economy, or the SDP – anything, in fact, other than the vote for the treasurership.

**Peter Kellner**

# Asbestos alarms unions

CIVIL SERVICE unions are demanding a code of practice for dealing with asbestos in government buildings after a strike over the issue at an East London social security office and the discovery of the substance at three nearby offices.

They are alarmed at the piecemeal approach to testing and clearing asbestos from buildings and claim that the methods used depend on local management; it is also alleged that some Government officials feel under pressure to save money by skimping on tests.

The three-week strike at Forest Gate DHSS office followed weeks of increasing suspicion that management was withholding information from staff and dealing with asbestos inadequately when it was discovered. Mr Harry Smith, spokesperson for the Society of Civil and Public Servants at Forest Gate, claimed that on one occasion three asbestos fire blankets found in the building were handed to an employee who was asked to burn them.

There was also a near-dispute at Colchester DHSS office where asbestos was discovered; 246 tests followed. Similar discoveries occurred at Ipswich and Romford. The SCPS has now warned members around the UK to seek plans of their buildings in case asbestos was used.

Judy McKnight, SCPS national officer, said: 'The trouble is that a heck of a lot of Government buildings are riddled with asbestos and much of it is getting to the end of its healthy life. This has come at the same time as tight Government spending cuts and an increasing awareness of the dangers of asbestos.'

**Jane Pickard**

# Conspiracy trial opens

THE TRIAL of six men and one woman accused of conspiring to cause explosions in Wales between 1980 and 1982 began in Cardiff this week. The judge issued a warrant for the arrest of the eighth defendant, Gareth Westacott, who failed to attend on the first day.

The seven in the dock have all denied conspiring together 'and with persons unknown' to commit criminal damage. Two are further charged with possessing explosives, one with possessing explosives with intent to endanger life or property and three with acting with intent to cause three specific explosions. They have all denied these charges.

The trial is said to be the biggest and most expensive ever held in Wales. It has taken 16 months to come to court, is said to have cost £250,000 to date and is expected to last up to three months.

One of the defendants, Dafydd Burns, has exercised his right to be tried in Welsh, so simultaneous translation facilities are available in the court.

Mr Justice Farquharson asked each of the seven men and five women on the jury whether they, their family or close friends had been associated during the last five years with any property which had been the target of a bombing or incendiary attack.

The case is the result of a long and wide-ranging police investigation of incidents in Wales and England over a two-year period. As Gareth Williams QC, counsel for the Crown, said in his opening, the seven are alleged to have taken part in 'an unlawful conspiracy to carry out destruction of property on a wide scale'. He claimed: 'The defendants agreed to carry out their scheme of destruction in order to further their own aims and beliefs.' Williams went on to insist that this was in no way a 'political trial' but pointed out that the defendants' views would form 'part of the background' to the case.

He told the jury that the case concerned 13 separate but connected incidents, the discovery of hidden detonators at Castell Coch and Ogmore Forest in South Wales and investigations by several police forces.

Four of the attacks described in his opening were on Conservative Party buildings in Wales. Another was the planting of a bomb at the home of Nicholas Edwards, the Secretary of State for Wales. The first seven incidents were accompanied by warnings or letters to the police or media which spoke in terms of English imperialism, the destruction of Welsh industry by the Tories, and the issue of holiday homes.

The first seven devices failed to go off. Later, bombs were found at an army recruiting office in Pontypridd, the BSC offices in Cardiff, the Severn Trent Water Authority in Birmingham, an NCB building in London, the HQ of the IDC group in Stratford and Welsh office buildings in Cardiff. IDC is a company which employed Denis Thatcher as a consultant and was involved in a North Wales housing development.

The Welsh Political Prisoners Defence Committee demonstrated outside the court on the first day and plans to do so every Monday throughout the trial. The case has attracted considerable publicity because of the length of time many of the defendants were held in custody before the trial. But it has not become the political *cause célèbre* that some of the Welsh Republican Left would like to make it. Public sympathy has been largely confined to the issue of civil liberties.

The defendants are Jenny Smith, Adrian Stone, Nicholas Hodges, Dafydd Burns, Dafydd Ladd, Brian Rees and Robert Griffiths.

**James Stewart**

# MISCELLANY

## Self supporting

A brand new first for the Labour Party is tucked away in this autumn's conference agenda. Gwyneth Dunwoody has broken the ludicrous convention that people do not nominate themselves for anything. Among the list of nominees for 'Dunwoody, Gwyneth' for deputy leader is one 'G. Dunwoody'. We applaud her radical departure from tradition, and trust that it has nothing to do with the fact that under Labour's new rules at least five per cent of Labour's MPs are needed to validate a nomination for leader or deputy leader. All the other candidates managed to pass this test comfortably; but without Ms Dunwoody's own signature on her nomination paper, it would have contained only ten names, or just 4.78 per cent of the PLP.

## Unlucky thirteen

Last Sunday and Monday the papers made much of the fact that Michael Meacher had received 197 nominations from constituency parties for Labour's deputy leadership, compared with 79 nominations for Roy Hattersley. What wasn't mentioned was that at the same time as it circulated the final agenda containing all this information, Labour HQ also circulated a list of 13 constituencies who hadn't paid their affiliation fees by 5 September, and are thereby disqualified from taking part in the ballot next month. Six of those 13 constituencies appear on Meacher's nomination list (St Helens North; Liverpool, Mossley Hill; Warrington North; Knowsley North; Banff and Buchan; Gordon), while only one of Hattersley's nominating constituencies (Carrick, Cumnock & Doon Valley) is similarly afflicted.

## Good housekeeping

An extremely worthy outfit called the International Union for the Conservation of Nature has been carrying out a survey for the United Nations on trade in animal products – seal skins, sperm oil, crocodile handbags, leopard-skin pillbox hats and the like. Dozens of countries replied, most of them sending computer print-outs of their customs statistics (which was just what the researchers wanted). Britain also sent a customs printout; unlike every other country, it attached an invoice.

## Easy rider

The scene: a London magistrates court not so long ago. A young motorcyclist was up on a speeding charge. The police claimed that he had been doing 60 mph, but the defendant assured the court that he had been creeping along at a mere 30. The beak interrupted to ask the biker: 'What gear were you in at the time?' The reply was immediate: 'I was wearing my leathers, your worship.'



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# Serpell by stealth — rail chief's secret plan

BRITISH RAIL wants to close 260 miles of railway, including two London terminii and a line which makes a profit, according to confidential railway documents. The documents are mostly background papers to BR's corporate plan, which was published last month.

The closure plan bears the stamp of the new BR chairman Bob Reid, who took over from Sir Peter Parker this month and who was largely responsible for the content of the lacklustre corporate plan.

The plan does not spell out the closures, although there is an oblique reference to them in its target of cutting the grants that the government pays to keep trains running on rural lines.

Indeed the corporate plan apparently rules out rail cuts, by quoting the 1975 government directive to run 'its railway passenger system so as to provide a public service which is comparable generally with that provided . . . at present.'

However, the background documents spell out a significant increase in the rate of railway closures – a Serpell by stealth. (Earlier this year Sir David Serpell's government inquiry into BR advocated drastic rail cuts.)

Over 50 lines are listed for closure, of which 18 carry passenger services. In total the closures involve 260 miles of route, of which 115 miles are used by passenger trains and the other 145 miles are used only by freight trains.

Over the past year or so four passenger lines have been closed, a total of 33 miles; and a further 89 miles of freight-only lines have been closed.

One of the most widely canvassed closures, the line from Settle to Carlisle, is confirmed in the list. This line actually made a profit last year, according to other internal BR documents. The line cost £375,000 to run in 1982, and earned £415,000 – making a net contribution to the railways' overheads of just over £40,000. The reason for this closure is the Ribblehead viaduct, which BR says would cost £6 million to repair.

The two London termini affected by the closures are Broad Street and Marylebone. The Broad Street closure is part of the plan to redevelop Liverpool Street station. The plan features moving the terminus of the Broad Street trains to a temporary station some half a mile further up the line. BR told the Liverpool Street station public inquiry the trains would eventually be diverted into Liverpool Street once redevelopment was complete. But objectors at the inquiry claimed that the intention was to sever any long-term link with the City, and to route the trains that currently use Broad Street around London and into Docklands.

The closure of Marylebone involves the closure of 14 miles of track. BR wants to redevelop the station site at Marylebone for offices.

Two sets of services use Marylebone, trains to High Wycombe and trains to Aylesbury. The Aylesbury trains will be diverted into London Transport's station at Baker Street and the High Wycombe trains will be diverted into Paddington. The diversion of the High Wycombe trains also means the closure of four stations in north-west London between Northolt Junction and Neasden Junction.

However, it is clear from the closures associated with Marylebone Station that the list is only the first stage of an even larger programme. Other secret documents show that the closure of Marylebone also involves (for operating reasons) closing the line from Aylesbury to Princes Risborough. This closure is not included in the list.

One of the subsidiary reasons for closing Marylebone is that the signalling on the line, which dates from the First World War, needs replacing, at a cost of £600,000. This, however, is not the reason for closing the Frome and Westbury 'avoiding lines' – the bypasses which avoid express trains having to rush through tiny stations. The whole area, including the avoiding lines has just been resignalled.

The closure of these lines will cause considerable delay to all trains to Taunton, Exeter and beyond. The line through Frome, for instance, is single track and can only be used by slow trains.

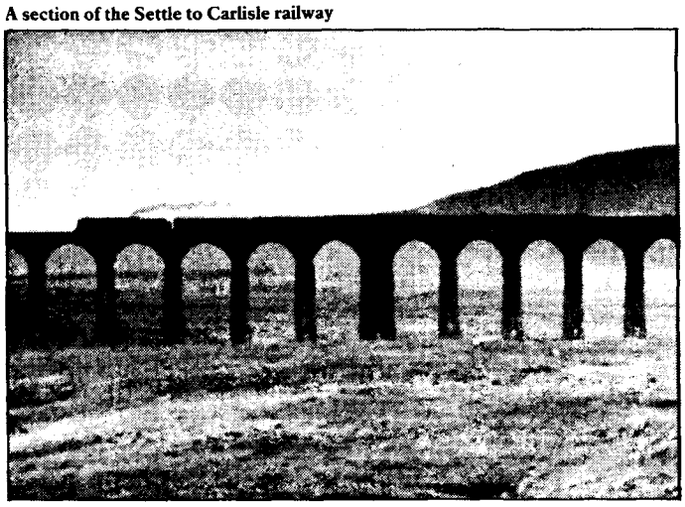
These west of England trains, which in summer are so full that passengers have to reserve seats, will be badly hit by the cuts. For BR also intends to cut 1,300 miles of track, without closing the line but by cutting double to single track, for example.

The freight closures could prove even more serious than the passenger closures, although in some cases (such as Astley to Halliwell and Wanton Walls to Niddrie Junction) it is hard to find anyone, even in British Rail, who knows where the lines are, let alone what trains they carry.

However the closure of the short branch line to Reading Central will unleash a large number of heavy lorries on to the streets of Reading. The line is the local coal concentration depot.

**Mick Hamer**

**A section of the Settle to Carlisle railway**



*Barry Wilkinson*

# Doubts over Scrubs denial

THE HOME OFFICE has vehemently disputed our account last week of the events in Wormwood Scrubs on Wednesday 24 and Thursday 25 August. A Home Office spokesperson denies that a prisoner was left in pain for three hours without attendance. He says that the prisoner reported sick at 6.30pm, a hospital officer attended at 6.45pm, a medical officer at 7.25pm and that the prisoner was removed to hospital 'before 9pm'. He also says that the prisoner was discharged the following morning, not requiring further treatment.

The Home Office also claims that in the incident the next day in the punishment block there was no damage to electrical wiring and that chamber pots were tipped on the floor and not over prison officers. This latter point has been confirmed by other sources. However, the Home Office could not say what damage did occur on the Thursday. It is known that the incident was serious enough to warrant a visitor to the prison that day being denied admission on the grounds that an incident was in progress.

The Home Office denial raises other questions. If its account of events on the Wednesday is correct, why did punishment block prisoners stage their protest? And if, as the Home Office claims, this is all that happened, why were prisoners Tommy Tangey and Larry Delaney transferred in order to 'cool off'?

**Terry O'Halloran**

# Fudging the register

BRITISH TELECOM is running into trouble in its desperate attempt to compile a credible Fixed Asset Register (FAR) by March 1984. Without such a register, the share capital which must be issued to sell off BT may not be authorised, according to trade unionists at BT.

The accounts department at British Telecom's HQ had instructed regional and area accounts departments to provide complete FARs of BT's telephone exchange power plant by 9 September, and of office equipment by 16 September. Neither of these deadlines has been met, because of official industrial action by the Society of Civil and Public Servants (SCPS). But SCPS members say that, even without industrial action, it is impossible to compile an accurate Fixed Asset Register.

For years BT's regional and area offices were never encouraged to give priority to their own FARs – a problem compounded by BT's highly centralised structure, its reduction in accounting staff (2,140 out of 35,000 over last two years) and the fact that, despite BT's high technology public image, accounts departments are still having to use extremely basic equipment such as pocket calculators. Provincial accounts departments do not even get copies of BT's annual accounts.

However, it is BT's unusual accounting policies which SCPS members say make a credible register impossible. For example:

- Many records of equipment commissioned as recently as ten years ago have been destroyed.
- Modernised exchange equipment costing less than £3,000 per item is not entered.
- Cable replacements and reroutes of cable do not appear.
- New buildings and plant are not entered in the FAR until commissioned.

To give some idea of the size of BT's register problem (and the panic it is causing): a system using three computers, introduced last year, collapsed within months. As a result, and under government pressure, BT paid out £160 million to equipment suppliers, without adequate proof of the debts.

When asked what effect the SCPS industrial action was having on the compilation of the register, and whether the task was in any case impossible in the time allowed, British Telecom HQ's accounting department said: 'We do not wish to enter into any dialogue with you at this stage and refer you to pages 38 and 50 of the 1982-83 Report and Accounts.' But it is precisely what is missing from that report which prompts BT's provincial accounts departments to expect a fudged register, upon which the company's share capital will then be based.

**Tony Benge**



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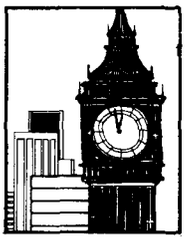

**PETER KELLNER**, Political Editor

# Meacher the man versus Meacher the ticket

THERE IS a natural rhythm to the life of parliaments. At first the government party basks in its victory, while the opposition party bickers over its defeat. After a few months the government loses its shiny image; after rather more months the opposition emerges from introspection and presents itself as a government-in-waiting. The subsequent election is fought between a government on the defensive and an opposition on the attack.

Things did not work out like that this year: *they* had the Falklands; *we* had our divisions; and in between the Liberal/SDP Alliance was hogging the protest vote. The Conservatives became the first party for 24 years to remain in power after a full parliamentary term.

It would be tempting to believe that things will now return to normal. Labour could spend a year or two arguing about its leadership, its constitution and generally about how many middle-class angels can dance on the head of an ungrateful working-class pin – and still win an election in four years' time. Unfortunately, the traditional rhythm of parliaments is having a rest, and may even be in a terminal coma. Within the next two years, Labour will face two tests that could determine not only its chances of winning the next general election, but its prospects of surviving that election as the main opposition party.

The first test comes next June, when elections for the European Parliament take place. Given the first-past-the-post system for electing MEPs, Labour is certain to enjoy more victories than the Alliance. The real test, however, will be whether Labour wins more votes. From time to time Labour has temporarily been in third place in the opinion polls; but so far it has never come third in a full-scale nationwide vote. If it does so next summer, Labour will no longer be able to claim, as it has claimed for 60 years, that it is *the* alternative government to the Tories.

The second test will follow shortly after; indeed its outcome may be conditioned by the first. If Norman Tebbit gets his way, unions will have to start holding ballots to determine whether to continue affiliating to the Labour Party. The outcome of those ballots will depend partly on the inherent character of each union's membership; but it will depend also on the image Labour presents to union members. If the party gets it wrong, it will be gravely wounded, both politically and financially.

There is, I imagine, nothing in the above analysis that any of the contenders for the leadership or deputy leadership of the party would dispute. Now, we all know that Neil Kinnock is going to win the leadership. We also know that neither Denzil Davies nor Gwyneth Dunwoody stands any chance of becoming his deputy. While there are theoretically 18 possible leader-deputy leader combinations, there are in reality just two: Kinnock-Hattersley and Kinnock-Meacher. It comes down to a choice between the Brummie pugilist and the Oldham academic.

MICHAEL MEACHER is a much-misunderstood and – by his critics – much maligned man. He is portrayed as an identikit Bennite, simply out to keep the deputy's seat warm until the great man returns. This is untrue and unfair. But the fact that the allegation can be made and not sound absurd reflects a more complex point about his candidacy.

There are, in fact, two Michael Meachers standing for deputy leader. There is Meacher the man – and Meacher the ticket.

Meacher the man is, without doubt, one of Labour's most attractive MPs. Not, perhaps, in the sense that Commons sketch-writers mean: his bias towards the analytical rather than the rhetorical skills means that he will never bring a lacklustre Commons debate to life. But it would be difficult to think of anyone better equipped to design a piece of, say, social security reform and guide it through a future Labour cabinet. It is hard to argue that the capacity to offer ephemeral entertainment to a few hundred MPs is more important to socialists than the ability to give lasting help to millions who live in poverty.

Meacher the man is a pragmatic radical. Two years ago, in the *NS*, Meacher wrote that one of the conditions for Labour's economic strategy to work would be

> that the unions and professional and managerial associations accept a firm policy on incomes so that the huge job-creating potential of this exercise is not dissipated in a pay spiral to protect real living standards.

On other policy issues, too, Meacher is scarcely an identikit delegate of the far Left. He does not feel passionately that, on principle, Britain should not possess a nuclear deterrent to the Russians – rather that, on balance, the risks of retaining Polaris are greater than the risks of relinquishing it: hence his proposal to put the matter to a referendum, and his willingness to accept its verdict.

In policy terms, then, it is hard to sustain the view that Meacher is to the left of either Kinnock or Hattersley. Meacher puts a greater emphasis than Hattersley on co-operatives and workers' control, while Hattersley stresses civil liberty, economic equality, bank nationalisation and the abolition of public schools. If the two men were asked to sit down together and, in a rare spirit of uninhibited co-operation, draft a joint programme for the next Labour government, I have little doubt that they would succeed.

On internal party issues, too, Meacher the man is scarcely the hero or ogre that, depending on your point of view, you might think. He has long been an advocate of one member-one vote in party leadership elections – not just in constituency parties, but in the unions too. (He wrote a considered article on this point in the *NS* shortly after the Benn-Healey ballot.) Then there is Militant. To be sure, he opposed the expulsion of the editorial board: but now he says he would rather accept the present status quo than encourage a drawn-out battle to have them reinstated.

Meacher the ticket, unfortunately, is rather different from Meacher the man. Whatever his personal qualities, he is explicitly the candidate of the far Left. He was chosen as their man following a meeting at Tony Benn's on the Sunday after the general election. His nomination papers were signed by, among others, the two new Militant MPs, Terry Fields and Dave Nellist. *Tribune* is asking for donations to his campaign fund to be sent to their office. Two weeks ago *Tribune* warned 'inside left' MPs who failed to support Meacher in the deputy leadership ballot: 'Do not imagine you can vote for Hattersley *and* expect to find yourself on the left-wing slate for the Shadow Cabinet. Far better to vote for Hattersley and apply for membership of the right-wing slate.'

The significance of that threat is not so much its tone of menace (the Right can match the Left in that any day), as the recognition that the deputy leadership contest is about tickets, and not about the merits of individuals. If Meacher wins, it will not be a victory for the idea of a referendum on Polaris, or for one member-one vote in the unions: it will be a victory for the Left ticket. Equally his defeat would be a defeat for the far Left, rather than a humiliation for the man.

It is for that reason I hope Meacher loses. His defeat would, in my view, give Labour the best hope of emerging from the next two crucial years with some chance of challenging the Conservatives for power in 1987 or 1988 – and so promoting the long-term political career of Meacher the man. □



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TRADE UNIONS

# Marching to pragmatism

**After one of the most depressing periods in its history the TUC last week had to begin finding new roles for its members and leaders. John Lloyd reports**

REALITY HAS a way of breaking through in the end. The TUC has ignored it for years now, or as much of it as it could: built a dam against it, created a dry space in which it could grandly ignore governments, call on workers to observe days of action, draw up lists of demands for policy. The 115th Congress of the TUC at Blackpool last week finally let a cold sluice of reality lap over the delegates' feet.

The background was in truth depressing enough – the 9 June defeat for the Labour movement, for a Labour Party whose leadership the unions had helped to choose and had backed: membership figures down to 10.5m at December 1982 (from a 1980 peak of 12.1m) and now probably under 10m: a hostile government for at least another four or five years, probably more: a clear rejection by the electorate, including many union members, of much (not all) received collectivist wisdom and practice: unemployment continuing high, and employment being restructured in ways which discourage unionisation. Too soon for obituaries, of course: to talk of British unions *dying* is still absurd. But too late for any more self-deception.

The inrush of reality co-incided with major advances by the centre-right in representation on the TUC General Council. The co-incidence was no accident. The centre-right are the 'radicals' now, determined to lead the march to pragmatism after years of suffering the effects of an electoral system to the General Council which, until now, built a big left-wing bloc at the price of under-representing, or not representing, whole categories of work-people.

The centre-right are radicals, however, in one thing only – in their desire to change the TUC as it is. The 115th Congress will go down as important in TUC history because it was the moment when they succeeded in accomplishing key elements of their chosen task. But there was little evidence of the more important next step of which the radicals of the centre-right must show themselves capable, if they are to confirm their hegemony over the TUC, and the Labour movement – establishing the direction in which they plan to lead the unions in the hard times ahead.

These are the twin themes which may be teased out of this year's Congress – the themes of change and leadership. The first was introduced by the man who, unfortunately, Congress will not 'have to kick around any more' – the complex, hard-shelled figure of Frank Chapple. The more vocal, Left delegates on the floor hated Chapple: his version of democracy was to rely on the silent assent of the formless mass of the union members who rarely attended meetings: theirs was based on activism, attendance, the war of position in committees. But Chapple's masses had delivered a kind of judgement on the activists on 9 June and the booing of him at Blackpool was subdued, almost ritual.

Listen, he told the delegates, listen and learn from the movement's millions.

> No one can pretend that these millions have not spoken. For more than 20 years our public popularity has been sliding – at the same time, too many of our members have been expressing their unease . . . it is crucially important that our movement recognises these criticisms. If we had listened earlier, we might not have suffered the catastrophe of June 9, or the defeat of five years ago.

Len Murray, later in a week which saw his stature soar, completed the one-two combination:

> . . . (our members) have voted. We have to respect that . . . we are representative institutions. Being representative means knowing and respecting what our members want and expect from their trade unions. Nor the Labour Party's unions. Not even *our* unions. The members' unions.

Listening and learning, knowing and respecting: the unspoken assumption behind Chapple's and Murray's words was that this fundamental part of the representational function had not been happening, or happening only patchily. In many minds as they spoke, was the bad record of the mineworkers' leadership in trying to persuade their members to take industrial action in opposition to pit closures. The thought was actually voiced by the heretical Alastair Graham, general secretary of the Civil and Public Servants Association: 'Some of us are still waiting (for Arthur)', he told the approving delegates in a piece of astounding and as yet unpunished lese-majesty.

BUT WHAT WILL the union leadership hear when they do listen? The Inland Revenue Staffs Federation did some professional listening, hiring a team of consultants to discover whether their members wanted all this balloting business. They discovered that they did: they could have taken a short cut and asked any mineworker how much he values his right to a ballot on the leadership and on industrial action. While most union members appear content with delegated democracy for most matters, they want direct democracy for the key things. It is an awkward fact for the union leaderships that their members' views co-incide, very roughly, with those of Norman Tebbit on the issue: but it appears to *be* a fact.

The widespread adoption of more direct democratic procedures threatens not so much union top leaderships (though it can do) as the intermediate layer of lay officials and activists, whose power has grown greatly in most unions in recent years – the Transport and General Workers being the most obvious case. These people *are* the active union: the organisers, the attenders at meetings, the delegates to this, that and the other meeting. The unspoken but widely understood compact between them and the passive members is that they are permitted a certain latitude in political expression, using the union as a base, in return for the hours of slog they put in for the members. Inertia can make that latitude fairly broad: members may object to their delegate putting forward ultra-left views (if they know about it), but they are often too shy, or can't be bothered, to go along to a branch meeting to say so. And, after a while, other more important matters push the issue out of their heads.

'Ballot democracy' cuts down that latitude severely, allowing the passive mass to strike back. It favours the charismatic (Chapple, Scargill) and those supported by the press (Terry Duffy): but it also enforces the disciplines of listening to and respecting the membership.

The challenge to leadership which the Congress posed was less clearcut. The most immediate is the continued weathering of bad times: through the slumping membership and income; through tough, low, pay deals and negotiations which will continue to exact 'productivity' concessions. Massive redundancies will continue and successful opposition to them will continue to be all but impossible. But workplace bargaining will continue and need not be (is not now) wholly one-sided. New working practices cannot be imposed on the base of sullen opposition: deals already struck at Inmos (Electricians), Thorn EMI (TGWU) and Carreras Rothman (tobacco workers) show gains for unions, more precisely for union *members*, as well as for the companies.

At national level, the TUC's talks with Tebbit will be a delicate minuet by both sides. Legislation on the White Paper is now too far advanced for much changing, but the suggestion of replacing the system of 'contracting out' of the political levy by 'contracting in' now appears to have dropped out of frame. The TUC may achieve success if it can suggest an arrange-



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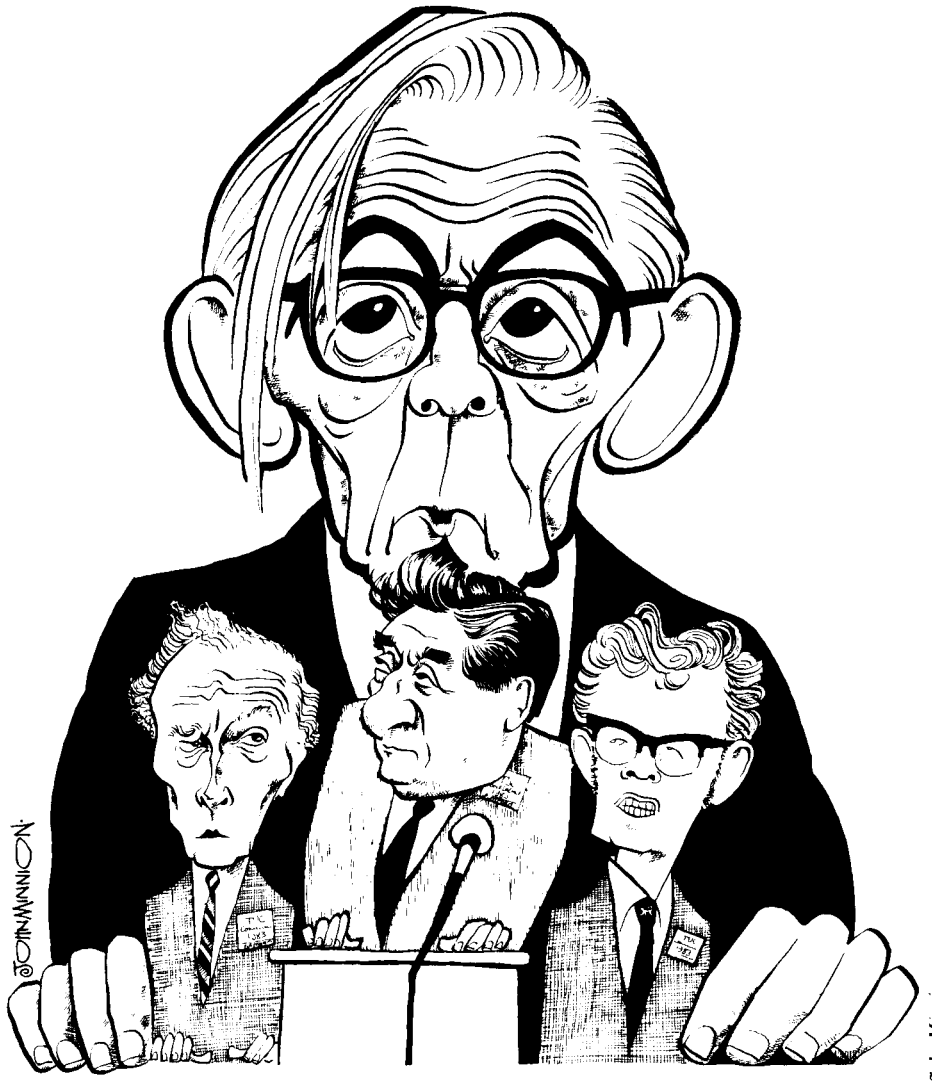


*John Minnion*

ment whereby members are made periodically aware of their rights not to pay the levy. Beyond that looms the nitty gritty question of the right to strike for those in essential services and whether it will be curbed. In all of these areas, it is likely that the unions will have to concede present freedoms of action: their 'reward' will largely be that their bargaining has ensured that things are not so bad as they might have been.

However, nothing in politics is forever. Increased pressure on the government, a decline in its popularity, a possible resurgence in the fortunes of the Labour Party, continued upturn in the economy, all these could change the bargaining strengths of each side profoundly. To be in a position to take advantage of such eventualities, the TUC must be engaged on the inside of the battle now, running the risks and taking the knocks.

Side by side with listening to the membership is the will to serve them better. Today, that means advanced computer systems, which allows the breakdown of membership to be *known* and thus to receive the differentiated services it requires. The need for such systems will become greater as memberships grow more diverse under the impact of technical change. They will cost more, and thus so will union membership. Members must be convinced that it is worth their while – and that will take some doing.

Both the activists and the members need to be given a sense of purpose in the midst of all this tactical pragmatism, a purpose which is greater than mere self-defence. The Blackpool Congress did provide for that, through the curiously allied figures of Rodney Bickerstaffe, general secretary of the National Union of Public Employees, and David Basnett, general secretary of the General, Municipal and Boilermakers' Union and now the fulcrum of the general council.

Bickerstaffe's members used their miserably low pay slips to good effect in front of the TV cameras in last year's health services dispute. Bickerstaffe deployed his growing presence to similar effect in Blackpool. The campaign to raise the living standards of the low paid was given to Congress as its main priority: a campaign which would ally the skills and strengths of trade unionism to a publicly accessible moral crusade which might overleap the shrinking boundaries of the Labour movement, or even extend these boundaries again.

Basnett sought to provide the means. He proposed both taking the issue out to the widest arena, and 'the co-ordination of our power – the power of collective bargaining – to achieve it'. Low pay – and a parallel push for a reduction of working hours, identified by the West German unions as their major aim in the coming bargaining round – would become common objectives on all affiliated unions' bargaining slates.

Those applauding Bickerstaffe and Basnett, especially those of their colleagues on the platform, turned over in their minds the awkward little matters of differentials, reward for skills, employer resistance and past failures of co-ordinated bargaining. But, if only because there is little else to clap about, it will be given a run: most union leaders remain idealists in at least part of themselves and will anyway be anxious to be on the bandwagon if it starts rolling. They have always grudged giving the TUC powers to co-ordinate their jealously-guarded bargaining preserves – but none are conspicuously successful in their present independence and now is the best time for the TUC to seek to extend its delicate powers a little further.

THE UNIONS must also strike some sort of new relationship with the Labour Party. The old links will be loosened, especially if Labour's executive takes the expected swing to the left. But to imagine their being completely severed is political nonsense. The network of interrelationships between the Party and the unions at every level has no doubt suffered damage, but it remains formidable. That is not the problem: the problem will be one of attempting to square a reformist union movement with a party which, at executive and constituency levels at least, rejects reformism.

The unions have no intention of simply letting the Party go: rather, many will wish to exert pressure upon it, so that it changes its policies and its image, so that it mirrors the TUC's swing to the centre. The TUC-Labour Party liaison committee produced a basic economic programme which proposed great (and unprepared for) responsibilities for the unions and, also, dragged the Party away from its inclination towards statist, centralised, command planning. However, many on the Party's Left simply ignored the change and few on the Right and centre gave much support. Joint policy making will have to be more serious in future, better understood, more thoroughly tested, better attuned to the public mood.

Union pressure on the Party will cause huge strains – and running charges from the Party's Left that the movement is retreating to the '40s and '50s, when 'boss' unionism ruled. The Party will bear its share of responsibility for finding a more mature relationship. We shall get some impression of the prospects of that from the Labour Conference in Brighton next month – though the message is unlikely to be as clear as that delivered in Blackpool last week. □



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# Taking the sexism out of class

*A working class committed to equality could create a new socialist popular will, argues Beatrix Campbell*

WHAT DOES it mean to ask if we have seen the end of class politics? Not much. Class difference is clearly alive, if not very well and very confused. The question ought to be: is this the end of class struggle as we have known it? Clearly, there is a crisis for class struggle, which manifests itself in a crisis of participation in the mass labour movement, a crisis of representation and direction. Most of all it is apparent in the breakdown of the relationship between particular forms of class struggle and the struggle for socialism – a relationship which has always perplexed socialists and Marxists. It is not the demise of class which is the Left's problem, but the demise of a popular, socialist will.

One of the parallels between the political crisis for the working class during the 1930s, the last era of great depression, and the 1980s is the collapse of popular socialist leadership. It was out of the experience of allegedly unprecedented affluence in the sixties that socialism expanded as a popular, radical, possibility. Today, Thatcherism has succeeded in routing the Left, even on what you might imagine was winnable ground – nuclear war and unemployment – not because its policies most effectively promote either peace or employment, but because popular concern with both issues is still not adequately expressed in the Left's institutions. Despite popular support for a peaceful European initiative against nuclear installations, and mass anxiety about unemployment, Thatcherism has consistently appeared to represent the general will of the people.

Yet this will can also make Thatcherism its prisoner. For instance, the Tory Party has had to be careful not to be seen as the party of war, because the peace movement, especially the Greenham Common women, have shifted the centre of gravity on war and militarism.

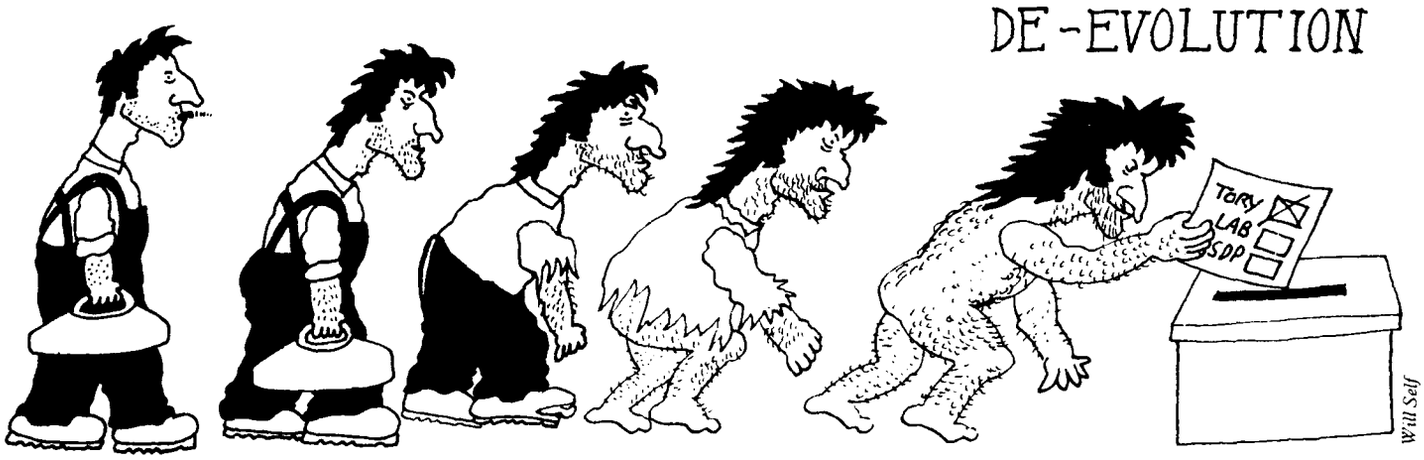
But the most significant of the Tories' dilemmas is presented by women, the constituency usually regarded as conservative, and always neglected by the political parties. (It is still the view of many Labour Party activists that to fight an election on a 'women's ticket' is a vote-loser.) When the Tories won the 1979 election we all expected a full-blooded and explicit campaign to throw women back into the home, into a proper relation of economic dependence, aided and abetted by a systematic destruction of the state sector, a vital source both of women's employment and caring services.

Yet although the Tories have assaulted the fortresses of the welfare state, what they have not produced is an explicit attack on the employment and social rights of women as such. In neither the 1979 nor the 1983 Tory election manifestos was there any such commitment. Clearly, the Conservatives are faced with a dilemma: their own women party activists have a vested interest in the changed circumstances of women and would not support the predicted retreat; and the culture men and women inhabit today is one in which the political gains chalked up by women in the seventies have massive support among women. The party of common sense has thus been unable to reverse the common sense among women about themselves. This is not to say that the Tories are not attacking women. They are. It is simply to say that they can't dismantle the new consensus about women, they are its captive.

Their last manifesto in fact said very little about women or, more significantly, the family. The family is the Tories' reservoir for social services, their conduit for democratic rights and forum for everyday life. The family chapter in the manifesto proclaimed that the Tories would not prescribe any particular form of family. But it did spell out the family's rights: to intervene in education, housing and social services, not by organising parents' and children's political control over the quality of education, but through parents' *rights to buy* education. The family, similarly, is the instrument through which people are to exercise their control over housing, again not through political control over design and management, but through their right to buy.

So in the new populism promoted by the Tories, the family displaces democracy, and democracy becomes consumption. In so far as this is resonant, it is because of mass pessimism with the forms of democratic control available to the mass of the people in these spheres. The very success of the new populism is not that it marks a break with common sense consensus, but that it articulates a consensus which the Left has not succeeded in transforming. At the same time, the instability of the new Right's appeal to consensus lies in those areas of everyday life around which only the Left and the women's movement seek to *organise* – it is those radical changes in the relationship between men and women, parents and children within the family, and in women's expectation of their right to paid employment, which have hoist the Tories with their own petard.

THE RESULT is a crucial re-alignment of political forces. The historic core of working class support for the Labour Party among the aristocracy of labour – white, skilled men – has been severed. It is the severance of their historic electoral allegiance to the Labour Party which is of the greatest political significance. They are not blind fools who will return to the fold when the scales



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fall from their eyes as the correct political programme is presented to them. No amount of propaganda will unhinge their feeling that they have real, material interests in the approach not of the party of their own creation, the Labour Party, but in that of the class enemy. Their economic individualism, their view of the family and the rights and responsibilities of men and women *are* voiced by the Conservatives.

One of the reasons for this is that the labour movement has evacuated the terrain of the everyday, private life, leaving it to be captured by the Right. The labour movement, in its institutional forms, the TUC and the Labour Party has only recently begun to intervene positively in the politics of everyday life *on the side of women* and on the side of the low-paid. It is no accident that its affirmation of the rights of women and the low-paid during the seventies was seen to affront the preferential treatment fought for and won, by the aristocracy of labour.

What the labour movement was faced with at the end of the seventies was the responsibility to create something it had never achieved – a democratic distribution of resources within the working class itself, between high and low-paid, black and white, young and old, and men and women. Without such an egalitarian imperative within the working class there could be no working class offensive against the unequal distribution of economic resources inherent in the capitalist system of exploitation. I do not believe we can mobilise as a working class against capital *before* we have been seen to put our own house in order. A working class movement whose day-to-day struggles have been founded on bargaining *for inequality* between workers de-mobilises its powers to attack the prerogatives of capitalist management and ownership.

PART OF the trade union experience of the last two decades has been about union attempts to make their demands match their new profile. (The unionisation of millions of women and low-paid workers within the public sector has been one of the most striking and creative characteristics of post-war trade unionism.) So here we are musing on the death of class, when what we are witnessing is the re-formation of the working class and its political alliances. The presence of organised, waged women in the workforce on the current scale is unprecedented in peace time. Women have clawed their way back into the social economy, and intend to stay there. That doesn't mean the death of the working class, but hopefully it does spell the death of the exclusive and elitist traditions within our own movement.

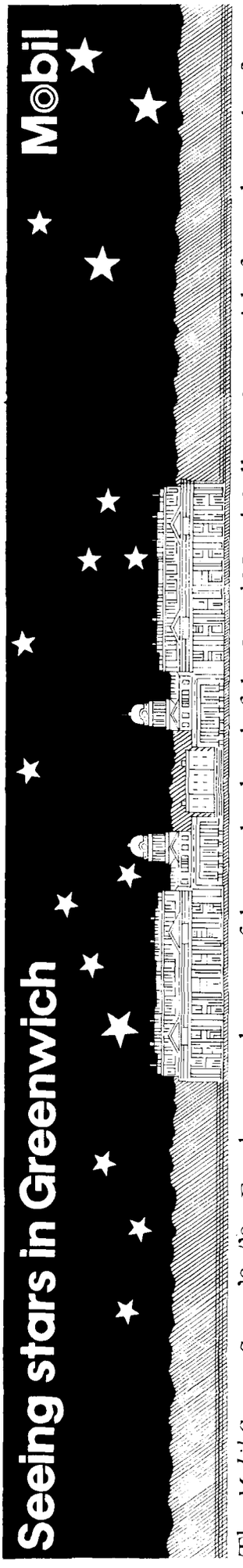
The problem for the movement is how it is to defend that transformation and how it is to formulate tactics and strategies which meet the consequent new demands. At the heart of this will be the form of defence mobilised around the welfare state. Our welfare state was constructed on the assumption of women's economic dependence; it assumed the payment of the family wage, of the individual responsibility of men to maintain women in a state of private dependence. But a contradictory effect of the welfare state has been that it has provided millions of jobs for women, and its services are often those which were previously provided, in private and unpaid, by women. It has also now provided mothers with the minimum means of survival without men.

In short, the concept of the family wage, upon which much trade union bargaining for men has been based, cannot prefigure a socialist society. But it has prefigured the break-up of many working class men's allegiance to bread-and-butter socialism. The Tories have claimed that tradition of male craft and sex chauvinism, so important in the organisation of the working class men's movement, for the Right.

IN THE sphere of public housing, a major provision strongly associated with the socialist movement, Labour adopted a patrician practice. For the best of intentions perhaps, it surrendered quality for quantity, and made the people live in homes over which they had little or no control. It has left Labour defending a housing stock and form of provision which is unpopular. I do not share the belief among some on the Left that we should now concede that the property-owning democracy is the only solution. That conceded everything to the Right, who collapse democracy into ownership. Rather, the Left must take responsibility for promoting democratic forms of management and popular input into design. And that means abandoning the habit of Labour local government management, which gives all power to the political and professional godfathers, and none to the inhabitants themselves. The Labour Party must take responsibility, here, for its own historic dread of independent movements of tenants, as a threat to its political guardianship of the working class.

Part of the problem is that the Labour Party does not *create* radical politics, it has sought to administer consensus – something the Right does much better. We know from history that working class rebellion doesn't just happen, the means of mass insubordination have to be created, not least because we are a class born into subordination.

Again, the efforts of the women's movement are salutory. It must be said, that the women's movement like the rest of the Left, has profound problems. But one of the most important things it has achieved is practical policies and services which challenge the conditions of women's subordination. For example it has created a network of refuges for women battered by men. In so doing it defends the survivors of the most extreme expression of civil war between men and women, and it also puts on to the political agenda our own responsibility, as a movement of men and women, for the reform of men. Many trade unions have also adopted positive policies to defend women against sexual harassment, and in so doing have taken a stand against forms of 'normal' masculine culture – pin-ups, sexist jokes and sexual assault. In intervening in the debate on pornography, the nature of desire, the

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problem of power in sexual relationships, and the construction of masculinity and feminity, it is intervening in a form of debate that can't be prescribed by resolutions and political programmes.

More than that, whether consciously or not, it is intervening in a debate always kidnapped for the Right – law and order. The Right gives names to dreads shared by millions of women, irrespective of their political convictions – the fear of walking alone in the streets at night, the fear that the world isn't safe for women. What the Tories don't name, of course, is that what masses of women share is a fear of men. The hang 'em and flog 'em response of the Right is countered by the Left's demand for police accountability. This is a proper demand – but it does not answer women's fear of men, and women's need for the 'men's movement' to be accountable for the behaviour of men.

WITH THESE illustrations, I want to show that far from being pessimistic, far from mourning the death of class struggle, we should rather identify the ways in which the Right has detonated the conservative political allegiances and political priorities of some sections of the working class. It is a cruel dose of salts, and for the time being it has dissolved some of the Left's political will. But all is not lost. An old working class may be waning, but a new one is being born, and we have enough experience to suggest how it can have a democratic, egalitarian political perspective.

We are only in one conjuncture in a long war for the heart and mind of our own class. In the past, the resolution of many such crises has been at the expense of women, but that historic compromise between the working class men's movement and capital has broken the heart of socialism. It is, anyway, a solution which is no longer available – women have changed.

There is much work to do to transform the patriarchal programmes the Left has been putting to the people. The debate around the Alternative Economic Strategy, for example, has been enlivened by the intervention of feminists who have argued that it takes the sexual division of labour as given and that its assumptions about full employment are based on men's experience of employment and their flight from domestic, unpaid employment. Why should women support a political programme that does not transform the sexism of pay bargaining or the division of labour in the waged workplace and in the home? They don't and they won't.

Nor will some of the laments about the demise of our heroic traditions of stoical self-sufficiency and mass mobilisation coming from some quarters help create new and relevant forms of class struggle. There is a mood abroad as we approach 1984 that George Orwell speaks with the authentic voice of English socialism, a voice that finds its echo today amongst those who, facing the future, can only summon a politics of nostalgia. They produce an account of the working class as inert and powerless and fail to find the creative fissures opened up by the current crisis. They don't see the new forces which have helped to change the political map, radical forces which seek not simply to manage a conservative consensus, but risk political exile by seeking to disrupt consensus. Far from expressing a progressive promise, they give voice to an isolated, anxious and curiously apolitical pessimism. □

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*Beatrix Campbell, a member of the Communist Party, is a journalist at* City Limits. *Her account of retracting Orwell's northern journey as a feminist will be published by Virago in Spring 1984.*

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# FEEDBACK

## Temptations of pessimism

*Anthony Arblaster, Dept. of Political Theory & Institutions, University of Sheffield*

Defeat seems to have sobered up the Labour movement to a remarkable extent. Faced with the grim task of discovering and explaining how, after four years of right-wing Conservatism and continuously rising unemployment, the Labour Party could still manage to lose three million votes, the post-mortem has been conducted with a striking absence of rancour and hysteria. Perhaps it has all been a little too calm. Perhaps a touch more hysteria would have been welcome, if only as evidence that the magnitude of the setback had been grasped. For, as it is, not everyone in the Labour Party seems to have shaken off the old habits of complacency.

The argument that Labour's decline is the product of social changes to which it has not adjusted, and perhaps cannot adjust, is one that I find puzzling. There are no obvious signs that social democratic parties are in decline on a world-wide basis. Of course the social and historical situation in such socialist-governed countries as Spain and Greece is very different from ours. But countries like France and Australia must surely have experienced or be experiencing social changes not unlike those taking place in Britain, and both now have social democratic governments. The French achievement is particularly striking in that the Socialists there are in direct competition with the Communists for the 'Left' vote. There was nevertheless a remarkable revival of the Socialist party in France in the 1970s.

It may be that Left parties elsewhere have made adaptations and changes which Labour in Britain has not. It may even be that Labour in Britain is so decrepit and arthritic as to be incapable of such adaptation. But that remains to be seen. Such international comparisons are not intended to suggest that Labour will inevitably survive as a majority party in Britain. But they do suggest that the idea that it is inevitably doomed to decline by adverse social development is simply not plausible.

And readers who feel that there is something stale or familiar about this argument are, in fact, quite right. We *have* been here before. In the immediate aftermath of Labour's election defeat in 1959, to be precise. That was the moment, nearly 25 years ago, when we first heard the argument that Labour, or even social democracy, was doomed by social developments to, at best, the role of a permanent minority opposition. Labour then went on to win, however narrowly, four out of the next five general elections.

There are even those who argue that, even if the argument was wrong then, in 1960, it is right now, in 1983. The answer to the question posed in 1960 by Mark Abrams and Richard Rose, *Must Labour Lose?*, is once again 'yes'.

To be sure, it does not follow that because the ultra-pessimists were wrong then, they are necessarily wrong now. But the very fact that they *were* wrong then ought to make us more wary of accepting these sociologically determinist arguments the second time around. Labour has been in business as an election-fighting party for less than 80 years. It has outlived predictions of its demise for more than a quarter of that period. That must cast some doubt on the basis on which those gloomy predictions were made.

There is one further reason for not accepting the ultra-pessimistic perspective. Just as, 23 years ago, it was used to support the Gaitskellite and 'revisionist' attempt to detach Labour from the working class and the trade unions, so too today the pessimistic analysis is usually linked to the suggestion that Labour is now too 'extreme', too far out of touch with its potential supporters. Once again the conclusion is being drawn that Labour must move further towards the 'Centre' – towards, in fact, the ground now occupied by the rump of the SDP.

Quite apart from the fact that there is already a party of the Centre for those who want to vote for it, it should also be noted that this argument is exactly like the one used against Thatcher by the Tory 'wets': any radical policy move away from the centre is doomed to electoral failure. Thatcher's success this year, if not in 1979, has shown that that particular argument is invalid. A radically right-wing approach, when presented with tenacity and conviction, can win massive support. Why should we assume that an equally dedicated Socialist approach could not do the same at some stage for the Labour Party? What would those who thought the 1983 manifesto 'extreme' have thought about the manifesto on which Labour won its biggest parliamentary victory in 1945?

I do not want to minimise the disaster which overtook Labour at the polls in June, or underplay the difficulties which it will experience in seeking to re-establish itself as a majority party. But there is a strong and persistent tendency on the Left towards a pessimism which turns finally into defeatism and despair. We need to guard against this



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tendency, and the sometimes feeble arguments used to endorse it, just as much as we need to be honest and realistic about what needs to be done to restore Labour's fortunes.

## Local activity or Liberal populism?

*Trevor Fisher, Political Vice-Chair, Union of Liberal Students, 1968-69*

Peter Hain's article on the Future of Socialism (*NS* 12 August) expresses a number of ideas about community politics which Peter has put forward many times before. In the light of the crisis now facing Labour, they may gain in attraction, but before they harden into a new orthodoxy a few basic points need to be made.

Peter states no less than three times that the Party needs a new *strategy*. This is undoubtedly true. For most of the post-war period it has staggered from expedient to expedient, with no clear perspective on either aims or methods. However, Peter's prescriptions are all at the level of tactics, or what he refers to as 'style'. He advocates seven 'things that need to be done' – selection of campaigning candidates, allowing community groups to use party HQs, forging links with neighbourhood and workplace organisations, encouraging Party involvement from women, blacks and youth and modernising Labour's organisation.

These points may be worth considering, but they hardly add up to a strategy. More alarming, there is a disturbing concentration on micro-politics at the expense of the macro. It is hard to react positively when Peter argues that Labour must 'take seriously those issues which touch people's lives most immediately' when these are defined at the level of broken pavements and damp council houses. These are vital issues, but it demeans the political consciousness of the electorate to imply that the British people react only to concrete issues. Labour's heaviest failures at the last election were on abstract issues such as defence and unemployment.

Despite Peter's conscience clause about liberal populism, it is hard to define the difference between his community politics and that of the Liberals. He is right to argue that socialists have generally neglected local activity and organisation. A socialist approach to local activity should, however, seek to relate the micro and macro levels of political work. Liberals prefer to organise politics at the level of the dustbin and leave it there.

Peter needs to show that his micro-politics can reinforce the central socialist struggle against the concentration of power at national and multinational level. Unless he can do this, it will be hard to escape the conclusion that he does not in fact have a strategy for socialist transformation. It is disconcerting, for example, to note the way many local councils have embraced small-scale decentralisation over the last two years at precisely that point when the labour movement lost the fight against the cuts. A cynic might argue that having failed to defend local government against a massive demolition job by the Thatcherites, decentralisation has been used to divert attention from a large-scale political failure.

If this charge is not to gather weight, Peter Hain and his sympathisers need to show how his socialist community politics differs from the populist community politics of the Liberals.

IRELAND

# Aborting Irish unity

### Mary Holland looks at options now

'WE ARE NOT talking any more about Irish unity. We are talking about an arrangement which will offer stability to both communities in Northern Ireland, and thus ensure peace for the island as a whole.'

The Irish politician who said this to me last week has impeccable nationalist credentials. He would like to see a united Ireland, but now seriously doubts whether it will ever be possible to achieve it – at least in the form for which Irish nationalists have traditionally yearned. We were discussing the all party 'Forum for a New Ireland,' set up last May to consider the obstacles in the way of Irish unity. We asked whether there was any point in continuing its deliberations after the results of last week's referendum on abortion.

Taken in the context of the Republic alone, the vote is not nearly as depressing as it sounds. In a low poll, over 400,000 people voted against the amendment, defying pressure from the Catholic Church which at times came very close to personal intimidation from the pulpits. In Dublin, where the Archbishop was particularly active in promoting a 'Yes' vote, five constituencies – including working-class areas – returned a majority 'No' vote. The poll demonstrated for the first time in Ireland the existence of a secular constituency committed to social reform, and that is something from which the Irish Labour Party in particular must derive encouragement.

But in terms of North/South relations, the poll made the clearest statement yet that Irish people are not prepared to consider the kind of changes to their State, particularly in the area of the Catholic Church's political influence, which would be necessary to make the Republic acceptable to Northern Protestants. No wonder that ever since the count dejected Irish Republicans have been saying that Irish unity is off the agenda for the foreseeable future.

Nonetheless, the somewhat bedraggled New Ireland Forum is to go ahead. Last Thursday evening, as the last results of the referendum were being announced, the four politicians crucially involved – Garret FitzGerald, Charles Haughey, Dick Spring and John Hume – were meeting to discuss its autumn work schedule. The abortion amendment and its implications for North/South relations were not mentioned. These politicians simply cannot afford to consider whether the damage which has been done is irreparable.

For them the problems of the North remain, as threatening and volatile as ever. The violence continues. The use of 'supergrasses' by the Ulster police already has the smell about it of previous attempts to smash terrorism by bending the legal system. Like internment, like the ill-treatment of Republican prisoners which led to the Bennett Report, like the 'criminalisation' policy which led to the IRA's hunger strike, the supergrass phenomenon has already caused bitter alienation within the Catholic community and is a growing cause for concern to lawyers on both sides of the Irish Sea. Provisional Sinn Fein continues to gain support at the expense of the moderate SDLP. James Prior's assembly offers no solution and the Northern Secretary is known to be impatient to talk to the Irish government. It was London, not Dublin, which pressed for an early summit meeting between Mrs Thatcher and Dr FitzGerald, now scheduled for November.

All this explains the urgency with which Irish politicians now regard the meetings of the New Ireland Forum. It isn't just the constitutional referendum which has brought a new sense of realism to politicians involved in trying to devise a solution to Ireland's oldest problem. When the Forum meets in plenary session next week, its members will have before them a document entitled 'Framework for Discussion of Fundamental Problems' which attempts to set in train a hard process of self-examination about the real costs involved in progress towards Irish unity – social, cultural, economic. It looks, for example, at the reality of Ulster Unionists' apparently immutable loyalty to Britain and even goes so far as to ask whether it will be possible to devise any political structure which can accommodate this attitude alongside traditional Irish nationalism.

There are other tough questions to be faced. In the coming weeks the Forum's

## THIS ENGLAND

£3 book tokens for entries printed (on postcards, please).

☐ I'm so glad someone has spoken out about the scandal of topless women on North Devon beaches, If God ever looks down on our crowded beaches, I'm sure He must be deeply embarrassed by the sight of hundreds of thousands of thoughtlessly exposed bosoms, all of them furthering the corruption of the young. – *North Devon Journal Herald* (Joy Falkner).

☐ An obsessively jealous husband paid two men £2,000 to kidnap his ex-wife so that he could murder her, but when they tricked him out of the money he went to the police to complain, Mr John Bevan told an Old Bailey court yesterday. – *Guardian* (Douglas Hayward).



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political members will hear evidence from a formidable array of academics, economists, lawyers and others on such topics as the extent to which British subsidises Northern Ireland and the South's inability to match this; Church/State relations in both parts of Ireland; how the legal systems might work together against terrorists; and, crucially, what further co-operation should be considered in the field of security.

What is all this leading up to? The Forum is due to present, probably early next year, a report in which it will lay out the options which it believes the British government and the people of Northern Ireland should agree to consider. Because of the need for a united front on an issue on which the southern political parties involved have deep historical devisions, this will almost certainly propose a number of alternatives. Mr Haughey's Fianna Fail party, for example, remains committed in name to a united Ireland, *tout simple*, in which Irish men and women could iron out their differences, if only the British would get out of their way. But Mr Haughey has already said remarkably interesting things at the Forum. In his first speech last May, he opened with a strong 'Brits Out' pitch, but then, having established his green credentials, went on to talk about the importance of continuing British citizenship for Northern unionists, the possibility of a defence pact with Britain and of power-sharing structures in the island of Ireland as a whole.

What seems to be emerging is that the Forum will propose three possible constitutional solutions to the problem of Northern Ireland. These will be: 1) a unitary state (Mr Haughey and Fianna Fail in favour); 2) a federal arrangement with parliaments in Dublin and Belfast (Dr FitzGerald and Fine Gael in favour); and 3) some form of joint sovereignty under which Britain and Ireland would together share responsibility for the administration of Northern Ireland. The implications of this in the security area would be dramatic and might well prove attractive at Westminster – given that the cost of security in Northern Ireland is now running in excess of £350m per annum, *excluding* the cost of the army.

If this sounds like yet another excursion into the celtic mists of wishful political thinking, pause just a minute. The idea of joint sovereignty as a possible solution to Britain's Irish problem did not originate in Dublin, nor from any Irish politician. It was first advocated, in considerable detail, by Lord Gowrie, until recently Minister of State at the Northern Ireland Office and a strong influence on Jim Prior's thinking about the future of Ireland. □

OBITUARY

# Peter Sedgwick

PETER SEDGWICK's sudden death, in circumstances yet to be explained, is not only an unbearable loss to his family and friends; it bereaves the Left of a socialist intellectual it badly needed – constructive, courageous, unrancorous, clear-sighted, unreverential and unfailingly compassionate. It robs the mentally ill, the vulnerable and troubled victims of inadequate health care and misguided anti-psychiatric ideologies, of a deeply thoughtful ally. It removes the translator and major authority on Victor Serge, and a leading scholar of the movements and ideologies of the Left. It silences a unique voice, politically committed but always balanced, urgent but always laced with humour. He was at once a master of the broad view, the fine-grained and deep argument, and the hilarious send-up. His company was life-enhancing, inspiring, endlessly amusing, in ironic contrast to his personal sufferings.

Peter was born in 1934. When he was three months old his mother died and his father disappeared. Raised in Liverpool, he was deeply affected by what he described as 'a series of catastrophic events in my family home' in which finally his adoptive mother 'was admitted, in a condition of extreme dementia, into the charge of a crowded and custodial local mental hospital in which she quite shortly afterwards died. Today that hospital still stands, less crowded perhaps, but still locked and, for masses of its chronic patients, lacking in many of the elements of a humane care.' Only then did he learn of his adopton.

As a scholar at Balliol he moved from Christianity to communism and then out of the Communist Party in 1956 with other members of the early New Left in which he was at once a central and individual figure.

He became a psychologist at Liverpool University but was forced out of this post when an article he had written about Durex's monopoly of the contraceptive industry led to a confrontation with his professor (and support from his students). There followed jobs as a school teacher, an educational psychologist, tutor at a psychiatric prison and research psychologist at an Oxford hospital studying brain-damaged patients. He then took up a politics lectureship at York University, spent a year in New York, and, finally, a post in both politics and psychiatry at Leeds University from 1974 until last week.

He spoke to many audiences but always with his own distinctive commitments – to the linking of the personal with the political, to political activity however isolated and hopeless it might seem provided that it was intelligently conceived, to the unmasking of bogus panaceas, dogmatism and intellectual arrogance, on both Left and Right. He was for long associated with the monthly journal of the SWP, *International Socialism*, to which he gave intellectual seriousness, muscle and breadth of vision.

HIS MAJOR achievement was his *Psycho Politics*, a widely and justly acclaimed masterpiece which brilliantly dissects the anti-psychiatric gurus – Erving Goffman, R. D. Laing, Michel Foucault and Thomas Szasz – who, in strikingly different ways, conspired to deny that mental illness is illness. His book was inspired by his opposition to their cultural hegemony which, in the late '60s and '70s they exercised especially strongly in the very left-wing causes and movements of which Peter was a partisan.

His compassionate concern was with 'The great seriousness and specificity of the dementing illnesses which can strike at any home including the private addresses of social workers, theatrical habitués and political militants of various progressive causes'. The book ends with a profoundly challenging socialist case for integrating 'the diverse demands of mental health workers, patients and the public'. The book's reception by psychiatrists, social workers, philosophers and indeed the Left was highly gratifying to him.

His editing and translating work on Victor Serge was a labour of scrupulous scholarship, laced with characteristic insight into antimonies and paradoxes. He was, indeed, a very good historian, sensitive to the effect of contingencies and circumstances, and the moral pressures they placed on individuals caught up in them. He translated *Memoirs of a Revolutionary* and *Year One of the Russian Revolution* and helped to edit *Midnight in the Century*. A fourth volume on the Serge-Trotsky relationship is soon to appear (published by Writers and Readers). This reveals Serge in the earlier period as compassionate and sensitive but a by no means unblemished hero. He was also working on Serge's five-part essay on Nietszche.

In addition, there are brilliant essays on the history of the new Left and on the varieties of socialist thought; and on Herbert Marcuse (the most penetrating essay ever written about him), Isaac Deutscher, George Orwell, G. D. H. Cole, Alasdair MacIntyre and last year on Daniel Guérin, whose bi-sexualism he discussed in relation to his transcendence of political divisions, mediating between libertarian socialism and authoritarian bolshevism, anarchism and marxism. He saw Guérin's 'entire creative life' as 'spent in the effort to interpret to one another standpoints of a partial validity but with a claim to all-inclusiveness.'

Peter Sedgwick's published writings, some of them scattered in esoteric and sectarian hiding places, urgently demand to be collected together in a handsome volume. We anxiously await any news of unpublished manuscripts. His letters to friends are no less deeply interesting and some of them too should be published. Despite his own encroaching private tragedy, in which his mind became clouded, amid a sense of political collapse and personal isolation, his collected writings will be a source of inspiration and will set a standard of reasonableness for socialists in the years to come. What we needed was for Peter to survive. But though he has not, his writings surely will.

**Steven Lukes**



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# DIARY

*We continue the extracts from 'The Secret Diary of Margaret Hilda Roberts, aged 14¼', as edited by Sue Townsend*

**THURSDAY:** I have written the following letter to the British Railways Board:

To whom it may concern:

I have the great misfortune to live in Grantham where your company has a disproportionate amount of trains and train tracks.

I should be obliged if you would stop your trains running between the hours of 9pm and 8am. I find it impossible to concentrate on my studies due to the clanking and clickety-click of above said trains as they pass my bedroom window.

No decent person travels during the hours of darkness. Indeed, as far as I can see, no decent person travels by train at all. Your company encourages people to become discontented with their station in life. As, if it were not for the railways, people would be content to live forever in the place in which they were born.

Yours faithfully,
Miss M. H. Roberts (Aged 14¼)

**FRIDAY:** Father asked Mrs Arkwright not to come into the shop wearing the deceased Mr Arkwright's work boots. Mrs Arkwright's response was typical, she said: 'I 'asn't no shoes of me own no more so's unless you is goin' to buy me a pair Mr Roberts then I shall 'ave to wear what comes to 'and, else walk about barefoot and show me bunions'.

Father asked me if *I* had a pair of unwanted shoes I could lend the wretched woman. I found an old pair of hockey boots and took them round to Railway Cottages. Mrs Arkwright was speechless when she saw my gift. In fact she was unable to thank me.

**SATURDAY:** Mrs Porke-Cracklin honoured us with her company this morning. She pushed to the front of the Post Office queue saying 'So sorry but I'm in a tearing hurry, I've people coming for drinks at eleven'. Mother quickly changed into her best cardigan and sold Mrs Porke-Cracklin a book of stamps. It was a proud moment. We are now patronised by the gentry! Father ordered a dozen packets of Earl Grey on the strength of it.

Later I helped Mother with the baking. I pointed out to her that her use of a *round* pastry cutter was uneconomic and demonstrated that, by using a *square* cutter, she would eliminate wastage. She stubbornly refused to change, saying: 'Lemon curd tarts has always been round'. I protested to Father and showed him the leftover shortcrust. He said: 'Can you explain this wanton wastage, Mother?' She said: 'Yes I can, Father. It's my habit to fashion the leftover pastry into a little man. I give him currant eyes and sultana buttons and then I cook him along with the tarts. Then I eat him while he's still hot and steamy. It's one of my few pleasures in life.' Father and I exchanged an amused glance then settled down to a pleasant hour with the accounts.

**SUNDAY:** Wore my new brown lace-up shoes to Sunday School. How glad I am that I did because Cecil Parkhurst was there! I found it hard to concentrate on what Archie Runcie, the new Sunday School teacher, was saying; all I could think about was Cecil's flashing teeth and brilliantined hair. We split into groups to discuss 'Blessed are the poor for they shall inherit the earth'. Cecil and I agreed that it would be a poor day for England if the likes of the Arkwrights ever took the helm of the country's affairs. Prior and his gang turned up half an hour before we finished. Archie Runcie should have turned them out but instead, to Cecil's and my astonishment, he invited them to join the Sunday School outing to Ely Cathedral! When I got home I told Father that Archie Runcie needs watching, he is dangerously tolerant.

**MONDAY:** What a horrid day! Our delivery boy is malingering at home with diptheria. Then, as if that wasn't enough inconvenience, one of the Arkwright children poked a finger into the bacon slicer! Mother and Father were too busy cleaning and stripping the machine down to attend to deliveries. So *I* was forced to mount the horrid black bike and go myself. My first call was to Willie Whitebait's wet fish shop where the smell of fish is enough to choke one. Mr Whitebait told me that he is selling up. He said: 'People will only swallow so much cod and quite frankly I am sick of serving it up.'

I wished him well and cycled to Riverbrook Cottage where old Mr Powell was lecturing the nasturtians on ancient Greece. Not wishing to linger I left Mr Powell's order by the gatepost and pedalled on to Haver House where Mrs Williams was giving tea to a very shifty looking group of men. As I stood at the door, I heard a florid fat man say, 'We must break the mould'. I looked in and saw him staring at a strawberry jelly that was refusing to leave its dish. After advising them to immerse it in hot water I left for home where I gratefully took up my chemistry homework.

**TUESDAY:** Mrs Williams has complained that her pound of unsmoked long back contained a child's fingernail and half a knuckle. Father was forced to refund her money. He has sent Mrs Arkwright a bill for one and fourpence farthing.

**WEDNESDAY:** Police Constable Perkins called round and asked to see the safety guard on the bacon slicer. Father said: 'It's up in the attic, we haven't used it for years. Do you mind waiting?' PC Perkins said: 'Never mind, Mr Roberts, so long as you've got one.' He slipped a tin of crab into his truncheon pocket and left the shop.

ROGER WODDIS

## The Pinochet Years

After ten years of darkness
The General is alive and well.
Other generals have had their victories
Over street-anger and flying stones.
This one, this strong one in Santiago
Protects democracy with electrodes to the breast
And the careful breaking of bones.
This one is revered in hell.

Louder than the sound of terror,
Louder than the frenzied 'Chicago boys',
Friedman-mad and ruin's underlings,
Louder even than *la cacerola*,
The middle-class banging their pots and pans,
Is a different music, a firmer voice:
Chile, racked and robbed, still unsilenced sings.

This one, this holy son of Santiago,
Taking the proffered wafer in his mouth,
Declares his faith, makes his promise good:
'I will be yet more harsh.'
This soldier serving liberty and truth
Grants his people the beneficence of blood.

The General is alive and well,
But the tortured years do not forgive.
Allende and Jara and the murdered thousands,
Unforgotten in the mind and in the heart,
Still live, still live.



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FOREIGN NEWS: SRI LANKA

# Racism triumphant

**Tamil organisations have no common platform in response to the violence against Tamil people, reports Francis Wheen**

*Colombo*

A FEW MINUTES after arriving in Sri Lanka last month, I was sitting on the pavement outside Katunayake airport, watching the birds and dragonflies. A Sinhalese youth sat down beside me, apparently keen to talk about the recent violence against the country's Tamils. 'Tamils all gone from Colombo now,' he said, with a broad grin, 'Tamil shops all burned. Perhaps all Tamil people will go to India now.' His tone was gleefully triumphant. 'Sri Lanka is for Sinhalese people,' he concluded – though Tamils have lived in Sri Lanka for over two thousand years, at least as long as the Sinhalese.

If one wishes to know where these Sinhalese youths get their ideas from, one need only look at Junius Richard Jayewardene, Sri Lanka's 77-year-old President. On Thursday 28 July, while Sinhalese thugs rampaged around the streets of Colombo and many other towns, the President broadcast to the nation. He did not utter a single word of regret or sympathy for the Tamils who had been massacred or made homeless. Instead, the man who likes to think of himself as the grand old statesman of the Third World announced that 'the time has come to accede to the clamour and the national respect of the Sinhala people', for all the world as if the Sinhalese were the victims.

Of course it is not true that *all* Sinhalese people are anti-Tamil; but those who sympathise with the Tamils no longer hold any sway. The Sinhalese liberal intelligentsia is impotent, and left-wing Sinhalese parties which showed signs of supporting the Tamils have all been banned. Any idea of 'class unity' between Sinhalese and Tamil workers is now non-existent: the pull of racial solidarity has been too strong.

All this leaves the Tamils feeling thoroughly beleaguered. More than 40,000 Tamils fled from Colombo to the northern Tamil town of Jaffna after the recent violence, but it is unlikely that they will all settle there. When I drove from Colombo to Jaffna last month, I took with me a young Tamil whose house had been burnt down. As he put it: 'I was born in Colombo, and I have lived there all my life. I was educated there, I have a job there.' He was unlikely to stay in Jaffna for long – not least because of the unlikelihood that 40,000 jobs can be quickly created in an area like Jaffna, which has been systematically starved of government funds in recent years. Many of the middle-class Tamil refugees told me that they intended to emigrate to Australia, Canada or India. But the poorer Tamils do not have even that hope. The Tamils who want to emigrate are aware that their departure will be an admission of defeat: 'But the alternative is to stay here and be killed'. Even a Tamil stronghold such as Jaffna cannot be considered a place of safety: only two years ago, police burnt down dozens of shops and houses in the town.

Jaffna escaped the worst of this year's destruction, but other Tamil towns were not so fortunate. The north-eastern port of Trincomalee was devastated. In one of the many burnt-out houses in Trincomalee I met an old Tamil man who had looked out of his window on the night of 26 July to see a gang of sailors from the Sri Lankan navy advancing towards his front door. 'I took my family and ran out to the back. The sailors threw grenades into the house. We fled into the jungle, with the men shooting at us as we ran.' None of the family was injured, but the house was reduced to rubble.

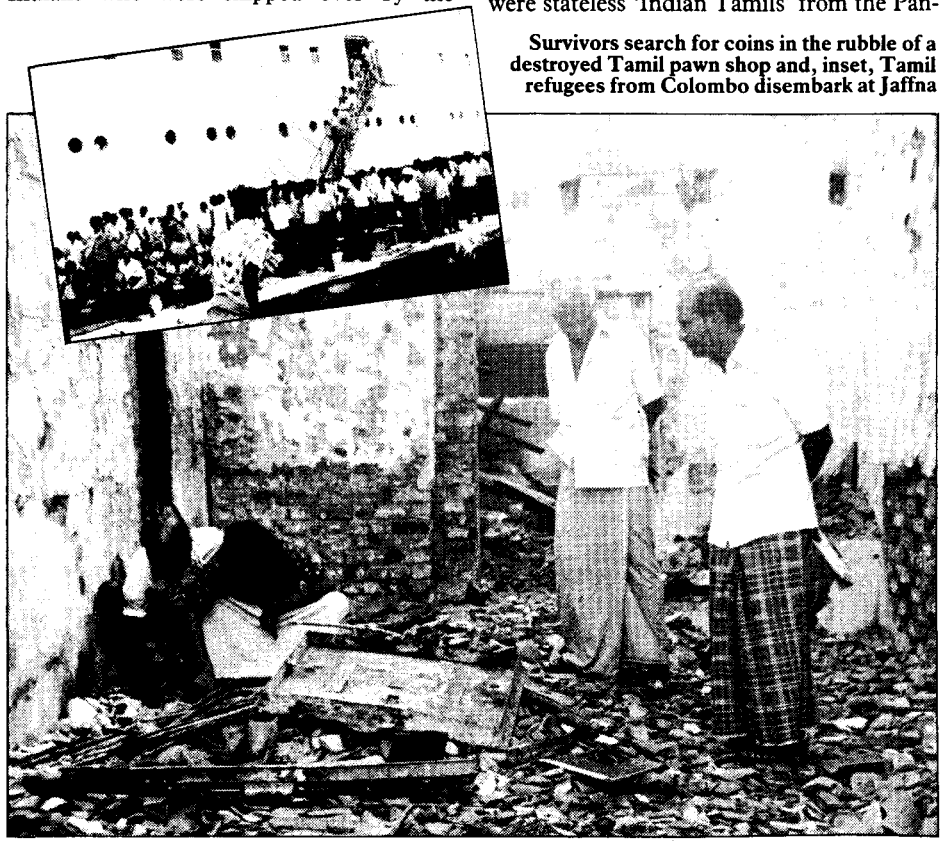
Attacks on Tamils in Trincomalee began several weeks before the eruption of violence in Colombo. By the time that Colombo started to burn, on the night of Sunday 24 July, there were already over 1,000 Tamils sheltering in nine refugee camps around Trincomalee. Many of them were so-called 'Indian Tamils', descendants of the south Indians who were shipped over by the British in the 19th century to work on the coffee and tea estates. After fleeing from the tea estates at Ratnapura and Matale during the violence of August 1977, they had settled in the village of Pankulam, just outside Trincomalee, where they erected simple mud huts and began to cultivate paddy. Two months ago the Pankulam settlement was destroyed by gangs of air force volunteers.

There then occurred an alarming and hitherto unreported incident. Late on the night of 24 July, armed police and air force men went to the Trincomalee refugee camps, accompanied by a convoy of 13 buses. 'They came just after midnight,' according to an eye-witness, 'and they told everyone to get into the buses. We asked what authority they had and where they were going, but they just waved their guns.'

All but one of the nine camps were completely emptied in this way, and nearly a thousand Tamil refugees were then driven through the night to the towns of Nuwara Eliya and Badulla, nearly 200 miles away. In the morning they were dispersed around several estates and told to start picking tea.

In at least one case, the authorities seem to have had second thoughts about the wisdom of this move. On 1 August, a week after their arrival, 124 of the Tamils were removed from estates belonging to the State Plantations Corporation and put into the Simecita refugee camp in Nuwara Eliya. They had apparently been considered a disruptive influence, on the grounds that they had been telling other Tamil tea-pickers about the anti-Tamil violence in Trincomalee. After nearly four weeks in the camp, however, they were put back on to the tea estates again.

Many of the refugees who were effectively kidnapped from the Trincomalee camps were stateless 'Indian Tamils' from the Pan-



**Survivors search for coins in the rubble of a destroyed Tamil pawn shop and, inset, Tamil refugees from Colombo disembark at Jaffna**

*Graham Evans*



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kulam settlement. The government's view is that these people, who were stripped of their Ceylonese citizenship soon after independence in 1948, should keep to their traditional areas in the hill country, where tea is grown, or should leave Sri Lanka altogether and 'go home' to India. For some time the authorities had been looking for an excuse to remove the Pankulam settlers; July's crisis provided one. In its haste to return the 'Indian' Tamils to the plantations, however, the government also transported a number of Tamils who had been born and bred in Trincomalee. A few have since managed to go home, but others are still stranded on the tea estates.

THE GOVERNMENT'S dread of 'Indian' Tamils moving away from the tea estates is well illustrated by the official treatment of the Gandhiyam Society. This charitable organisation set up a number of settlements around the northern town of Vavuniya in 1977 and helped to rehabilitate the hundreds of Indian Tamils who had fled from the violence in the hill country. Gandhiyam taught these refugees simple methods of cultivation and irrigation; it helped them to build huts; it set up schools and medical centres.

The authorities watched all this with mounting alarm and in April this year arrested Gandhiyam's two leaders, Dr Somasunderam Rajasunderam and Mr S. A. David, under the Prevention of Terrorism Act – which allows suspects to be held for up to 18 months without being charged. They were both tortured in army camps before being transferred to Welikade prison in Colombo. There, at the end of July, Dr Rajasunderam was one of the 54 Tamil prisoners massacred in their cells by a small army of commandos, prison officers and Sinhalese prisoners.

Of course the government has hotly denied that prison officers – let alone commandos from outside – took part in the massacre at Welikade jail. The official account is that a group of Sinhalese prisoners got 'out of control' and set upon the Tamils; that the prison staff tried in vain to stop them. This has been accepted uncritically by the Sri Lankan newspapers, despite the rather obvious flaw in the official explanation: Welikade is a maximum security prison and most of the Tamils who were killed were supposedly dangerous guerrillas. The idea that Sinhalese prisoners could amble into the cells and beat 54 of them to death without official cooperation beggars belief. But, in any case, I have received accounts from people in the jail which made it clear that the massacre was conducted with the support of the authorities – with the notable exception of the prison's superintendent, who is now to be transferred.

The apparently limitless Sinhalese capacity for self-delusion these days is also exemplified by the story I was told by a number of people in Colombo: these people 'knew for a fact' that the Jaffna public library, which was destroyed in 1981, had been burnt down by the 'Tigers', a Tamil guerrilla group in the north. In fact it has long been established beyond doubt that the police were the culprits. But the Sinhalese cannot allow themselves to admit such things, and their terror of the Tigers is such that they are more than willing to credit the group with anything.

Although the Tigers are the only Tamil underground group to receive any publicity, there are a number of others. The groups agree on one thing: the need to establish a separate Tamil state of Eelam in the north and east of the island. Apart from that, the disagreements are strong. Some of the groups are non-violent; others support guerrilla warfare but not the 'terrorism' of the Tigers' hit-and-run attacks. Some of the groups are devotedly marxist, while others have no political ideology beyond their commitment to a state of Eelam. The Tigers have always been the most non-political of the groups, but they recently decided that this was bad for their image so they hired a social scientist called A. S. Balasingham as their 'chief theoretician'.

The other groups are an acronym-lover's dream. There is the People's Liberation Organisation of Tamil Eelam (PLOTE); the Tamil Eelam Liberation Organisation (TELO) and its offshoot, the Tamil Eelam Liberation Army (TELA); the Tamil Eelam Liberation Front (TELF), the most determinedly non-violent group, which is now almost defunct because practically all its members are in jail; the Eelam Revolutionary Organisers (EROS) and their splinter groups, the General Union of Eelam Students (GUES) and the Eelam People's Liberation Front (EPLF).

Relations between these groups are not always friendly. Only last month the leader of the TELA, a youth called Thevan, was gunned down in Jaffna by the Tigers. All the groups have bases in Madras, where the state government of Tamil Nadu allows them to operate quite openly. Since the July pogrom they have been urgently trying to achieve some kind of unity. Although progress has been made, even if the political differences can be overcome there will still be a problem with personality clashes. The leader of PLOTE, Uma Maheswaran, used to head the Tigers until he was unceremoniously deposed by the present Tiger chief, Vellupillai Prabhakaran, a 29-year-old Tamil who likes being photographed in full combat gear. Since then the two men have been sworn enemies, and last year they had a shoot-out at the Pondy bazaar in Madras; surprisingly, both men survived.

If the groups can unite, they will still have to resign themselves to a long guerrilla war. The Sri Lankan government has shown that it is more determined than ever to resist the demand for a Tamil state of Eelam, and that it is willing to ask other countries (including Britain) to assist it. No one knows exactly how many Tamils died in this year's violence, but the best estimate is about 2,000. It is hard to avoid the gloomy conclusion that much more blood will be spilt before long. □


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AIRLINE DISASTER

# Tragedy – or crime

## Alan George remembers when the plane was Libyan

THE FURORE in Washington over the shooting down of the Korean airliner contrasts with America's meek response to Israel's destruction of a Libyan civil plane ten years ago, when 106 people died.

'A crime against humanity . . . a massacre . . . inhuman . . . the Soviet Union against the world and the moral precepts which guide human relations among people everywhere . . .' – these are just some of the words used by President Reagan to denounce the Soviet Union's killing of 269 people on board the South Korean airliner.

Apart from words, the United States has helped initiate a UN Security Council debate; it has closed the American offices of the Soviet airline Aeroflot; banned US airlines from co-operating with Aeroflot; suspended negotiations with Moscow on economic and cultural exchanges; it has called for action by the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO, a specialised UN agency); it has urged western countries to impose joint sanctions against the Soviet Union; and it has applauded a ban on flights to Moscow called by the International Federation of Airline Pilots Associations.

However, the 'civilised people' for whom Reagan has become self-appointed spokesman, have not, it seems, always felt so strongly about the murder of innocent passengers on civil airliners. On 21 February 1973, Libyan Arab Airlines flight LN 114 from Tripoli to Cairo via Benghazi strayed into Israeli-occupied Sinai. Israeli fighters blasted the Boeing 727 out of the air, killing 106 passengers and crew.

Israel, while expressing deep regret at the loss of life, refused to accept responsibility. Moshe Dayan, then Defence Minister, in-



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sisted that: 'There is no reason why the Israeli Government should be put in a position to feel guilty', adding that he was 'completely satisfied' with the action of the Israeli fighter pilots. He placed responsibility with the Libyan plane's French pilot.

The American response was astonishingly mild. In messages of condolence to Libya and Egypt (among the dead were many Egyptians), President Nixon and Secretary of State William Rogers said they were 'saddened'; and it was reported that the State Department had privately expressed its displeasure to the Israeli Embassy in Washington.

On 23 February 1973, the *New York Times* said: 'The White House and the State Department were reported to have decided that little would be gained by further public comment on the matter, and that the best interests of the Middle East would be served by encouraging diplomatic moves to reduce tension.'

This was confirmed on 25 February 1973, when Assistant Secretary of State Joseph Sisco was asked on CBS Television's *Face the Nation* what was the reaction of the US Government. He replied: 'It's a major tragedy, and I think it reflects the deep schisms and the emotionalism and the distrust that have long been existent in the Middle East.'

He continued: 'I hope, however, that this latest tragedy results in a cogent reminder, that is if we need a cogent reminder, that we've got to get on with the job of getting this problem, as President Nixon said, off dead-centre' (whatever that was supposed to mean).

The US sought to dampen, rather than escalate, the widespread international outrage at Israel's action. Washington made no calls for UN Security Council moves, and there were no demands for sanctions against Israel.

When the ICAO met in emergency session on 28 February 1973, the US did vote for a resolution 'condemning' Israel for shooting down the Libyan airliner, but the American delegate, Betty C. Dillon, said that the US was nevertheless 'opposed to the (Resolution's) condemnatory language'.

The ICAO called for an investigation into the disaster, and Ms Dillon said that 'In voting for this Resolution, the US wishes to make clear that we do not interpret it as prejudging the outcome of such an investigation' – a far cry from President Reagan's recent demand for the ICAO to 'investigate this crime'.

Administration officials seem aware that America's meek reaction in 1973 casts doubt over its sincerity in 1983 and supports suspicions that Reagan is hyping up the Korean disaster to bolster his global anti-communist crusade. State Department spokesman Alan Romberg asserted on 2 September that America had been 'no less concerned' at the Libyan than at the South Korean disaster.

Asked to explain why Washington reacted so mildly in 1973, however, other State Department officials have refused to comment, saying only that they cannot speak for the Nixon Administration, adding that the two disasters have not yet been subject to any 'official statement of comparison'. □

CHAD

# Proxy wars

## Who's fighting for what, asks Suzanne Cronje

FRENCH-AMERICAN rivalry in Africa is becoming as much of a threat to peace and stability in the continent as East-West tensions. Nowhere is this more evident than in Chad, where Washington pressured a reluctant President Mitterrand to intervene militarily, against the wishes of some of France's most important North and West African trading partners.

Feelings about this in Paris are reflected in official statements:

● **1 July:** A Foreign Ministry spokesman said that 'there are no French soldiers in Chad and no plans to send any'.
● **1 August:** The Foreign Ministry issued what must be one of the shortest communiqués on record: 'Chad: France is not altering her position. She is keeping to the framework of the 1976 agreement. She is adapting her logistical support to the battle conditions'.
● **8 August:** AWACS were sent by the US to monitor events in Chad and US military advisers landed in the capital, Ndjamena. A French journalist asked Foreign Minister Cheysson whether 'the Americans are intervening in Chad on their own initiative or in concert with us'. Cheysson: 'You should ask them why they are intervening. This is obviously not being done in concert with us'.
● **15 August:** French parachutists were deployed north of Ndjamena. A few days later there were about 3,000 French troops in Chad to protect the capital and the relatively prosperous south of the country against the Libyan-backed army of the ousted President, Goukouni Oueddei. The Americans did not send US troops, but about 3,000 Zairean soldiers arrived in support of President Hissene Habre, who defeated Goukouni Oueddei last year with the help of CIA funds. President Reagan congratulated President Mobutu of Zaire for his 'courageous' intervention in Chad – paid for presumably by the US. (Zaire had to devalue its currency last week by 80 per cent to get a comparatively small IMF standby credit.)

In Africa these developments are not well received. Nigeria's President Shagari, in his first statement after being re-elected, condemned 'countries who are poking their noses into the affairs of Chad', promising top-level peace moves through the Organization of African Unity (OAU). In a message to the OAU, President Benjedid of Algeria warned that the independence of all African countries was being threatened by the foreign intervention in Chad. Algiers stressed that its anxiety was caused by 'the open engagement of powers alien to Africa' – in other words, not by Libya's Colonel Gadaffi.

This is going to embarrass the US Vice-President Bush, whose tour of North Africa this week takes in Algeria as well as Morocco and Tunisia. The tone of the anti-Libyan statements issuing from the White House recently suggests that God has created Chad specifically to feed Reagan's fantasies about Gadaffi. Bush has come prepared to discuss Libyan intervention in Chad as a prime cause of the conflict, but he may find this approach to be incompatible with the other aim of his visit – to strengthen US influence in a part of North Africa which the French have traditionally regarded as *their* stamping-ground: the Maghreb.

In his statement on arrival in Morocco Bush expressed his satisfaction at visiting the area at a time when determined efforts were being made towards regional cooperation. But the Maghreb does not only consist of the three countries on his itinerary. It includes Libya and Mauritania and the possibility of including a future Western Saharan state, as well as offering membership to Chad (once peace is restored) has been widely canvassed. The search for peace settlements within a Maghrebian framework was discussed by Gadaffi with King Hassan II of Morocco earlier this year, at a historic meeting which ended 14 years of cold war between the two countries.

FRANCE HAS promoted these moves towards Maghreb unity, which happen to coincide with a proposal from Paris for a West Mediterranean area of special cooperation. In this, the European members – France, Spain and Italy, but especially France – would enjoy favourable economic relations with the Maghreb. Of course, these considerations (and the existing profitable trade links with Libya) were partly behind President Mitterrand's reluctance to commit troops in a conflict which could develop into a major war with Libya. For the same reason, Paris is anxious to get a formal ceasefire and peace talks in Chad. To this end, Prime Minister Pierre Mauroy paid an 'exceptional visit' to Algiers at the end of last week, just before Bush's arrival in North Africa – probably no coincidence.

The suggestions for a settlement in Chad range from partition to the revival of the all-party interim government, set up after lengthy negotiations in Nigeria in 1979, with Goukouni Oueddei as President and Hissene Habre as Defence Minister. This administration broke up after a quarrel in December 1980, when Habre crossed into Sudan to organise the army with which he wrested power from Goukouni in Ndjamena 18 months later. The legitimacy of the various factions is therefore a fine point, but since both Habre and Oueddei are northern leaders new partition or federation plans are relevant to the present situation. The Nigerian call for another round table conference – which is now being taken up by the OAU – is the only alternative ▷



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Lagos has some leverage to bring it about. Before the main fighting in Chad erupted in June, border skirmishes near Lake Chad gave rise to a minor war between Habre's troops and the Nigerian army. While this was in progress, Ndjamena's main supply route – a road through Nigeria – was cut off, resulting almost immediately in Chadian shortages of petrol and other essential military supplies. Lagos clearly has the power to exert pressure. But the most effective means of persuasions are held by France and Libya, whose armed backing for Habre and Goukouni respectively could quickly secure their attendance at a conference table. Gadaffi seems as anxious as France to devote himself to North African questions and would cooperate as far as Chad is concerned.

What remains uncertain is Washington's attitude. Habre has already threatened to turn to the US for help, should France fail him. The conflict in Chad, as long as it does not involve American personnel, is not only a convenient issue to keep up the campaign against Gadaffi; it also compels France to engage itself in an African conflict and therefore restrains French criticism of the American role in central America. A month ago Zaire was the only country, at a meeting of ten African nations, to refuse to sign a communiqué calling on the OAU to arrange a ceasefire. From this it was deduced that Washington was not overwhelmingly in favour of peace at that time. But US attitudes might change in the light of Bush's North African tour. □

LEBANON

# US shells Beirut

## Claudia Wright describes US tactics

THERE IS an old Iraqi saying – 'The believer is never stung from the same Scorpion's nest twice'. Only the Reagan Administration is so incompetent as to miss the point in the current Lebanese crisis.

Leading Arab figures in Lebanon and Syria can remember the 1958 crisis, when 15,000 US troops landed in Beirut, allegedly to save the Maronite President, Camille Chamoun, from a Moslem rebellion. For those whose memories or convictions don't go back that far, there are the much fresher events of the 1976 civil war, the 1981 ceasefire negotiations with Israel, last year's negotiations to evacuate the Palestinian forces and relieve Beirut and this year's US-Israel-Lebanon agreement. The fresher the memory, the more wary the Arabs are of being stung again.

At secret meetings in Paris at the end of August that Colonel Robert McFarlane, the US negotiator, had with Walid Jumblatt, the Druze leader, and Wadi Haddad, the Lebanese government representative, the US offered an old-fashioned ploy. Only a novice would have given it a chance of success.

At the first meeting, McFarlane intimated to Jumblatt that the US was ready to abandon the peace agreement between Israel and Lebanon. If that was true, Jumblatt was led to believe, then the Druze and the Syrians could count on US backing for a genuine reconciliation with the Gemayel government in Beirut.

Jumblatt was encouraged. There were three conditions, he said, for a pact with the Gemayel government aimed at avoiding fighting in the Shouf mountains in Eastern Lebanon.

Gemayel should make a formal declaration of his readiness to review and revise the pact with Israel; the Phalange militia forces had to be withdrawn from positions which they had taken during the Israeli occupation; and the Druze militia would be allowed to retain their arms. Wadi Haddad, Gemayel's security adviser, signalled his readiness to accept Jumblatt's conditions. The press was tipped off that a deal had been struck.

Then, at McFarlane's second meeting with Jumblatt, the US position changed. The Reagan Administration had negotiated the Israel-Lebanon agreement; it stood behind it, McFarlane said, and would not allow it to be revised.

McFarlane thought that he could soften Jumblatt and lure him into talks with Gemayel. When Jumblatt signalled his readiness to agree, McFarlane thought that Jumblatt was in a desperate position and would not pull back. But after the Syrian foreign minister, Abdel Halim Khaddam, told him that McFarlane's reaction proved that the US wasn't negotiating seriously, that is exactly what he did.

McFarlane's second ploy fared no better. He told Wadi Haddad that he had a plan that would take care of the Syrians and neutralize their ability to stiffen Jumblatt's resistance. Without Syrian backing, McFarlane assured Haddad, Jumblatt would have no choice but to agree to talk with Gemayel – on Gemayel's terms. McFarlane's plan was to recruit Prince Bandar ibn Sultan, the newly designated Saudi ambassador to Washington. Publicly, Bandar's mission was to mediate between the Syrians and the Lebanese; privately, he was to put Saudi pressure on Syria to relax its hold on Jumblatt.

THE REAGAN ADMINISTRATION has assiduously cultivated Bandar, who led the Saudi lobbying effort to get the US to sell AWACS aircraft to Saudi Arabia in 1981 and remained in Washington thereafter as a private channel between the White House and King Fahd. Early this year, Bandar was used to relay messages intended by the Administration to soften King Hussein's and Yasser Arafat's reluctance to accept participation in talks with Israel under the Reagan plan for the Lebanon.

Bandar's new mission depended on convincing the Syrians that there was a worthwhile payoff in a deal between Gemayel and Jumblatt. McFarlane's arrogant handling of Jumblatt made that almost impossible. This was followed by stiff warnings of US military retaliation against Syrian units in Lebanon. But the warnings only convinced the Syrians that the US was bluffing.

As McFarlane's tactics collapsed on both fronts, the confusion was so great at the White House that it declined an invitation to provide a spokesman to explain on network television what the policy was and what it was trying to accomplish. On one point, however, there was apparent agreement among Administration officials. The Administration had to look tough without risking further casualties. The solution devised was to order the *USS New Jersey* to the Eastern Mediterranean to threaten Syrian, Druze and Shiite positions with the heaviest non-nuclear explosives in the US naval inventory.

When the frigate, *USS Bowen*, fired four 5-inch shells on 8 September in response to the shelling of Marine positions near Beirut airport, the US took a step which it avoided during troop landings in July 1958. The last time that US warships shelled this Arab territory was 42 years ago, on 8 June 1941. That was during Operation EXPORTER, the Allied landings which seized control of Lebanon and Syria from the Vichy French administration during World War II.

McFarlane bluntly told the Syrian foreign minister on 10 September that the *New Jersey* was being sent to Lebanon. The Syrian replied by recommending the US concentrate on achieving an internal political settlement among the Lebanese rather than threatening Syria with new weapons.

Until this week, the reconditioned battleship had been in the Pacific, off the coast of Central America, threatening the Nicaraguans. It will take more than seven days' steaming to reach its new position off the Lebanese shore. Bombardment by the *New Jersey* would represent a notable escalation of US firepower – the battleship has nine 16-inch guns, which fire shells weighing 2,700 pounds each over a range of 23 miles. By contrast, the shells from the *USS Bowen* weighed only 47 pounds each.

General Paul Kelley, Commandant of the US Marine Corps, told the *New Statesman* that he 'endorsed' the *New Jersey* mission for several reasons: the 16-inch guns have 'pinpoint accuracy', the ship can fire at targets at night and in all weather conditions, and is relatively immune to counter-fire or missiles. Kelley likened the marines' current 'presence mission' to their role in 1958, but he denied that US forces were engaged in combat or hostilities. Kelley said those terms mean 'moving the combat to the adversary' – something he said the US has no intention of doing.

The reasoning behind the *New Jersey* decision is primarily to frighten Jumblatt and the Syrians – without making the destructive potential of the *New Jersey*'s guns as visible on television as air raids from the aircraft carrier *USS Eisenhower* would be. □



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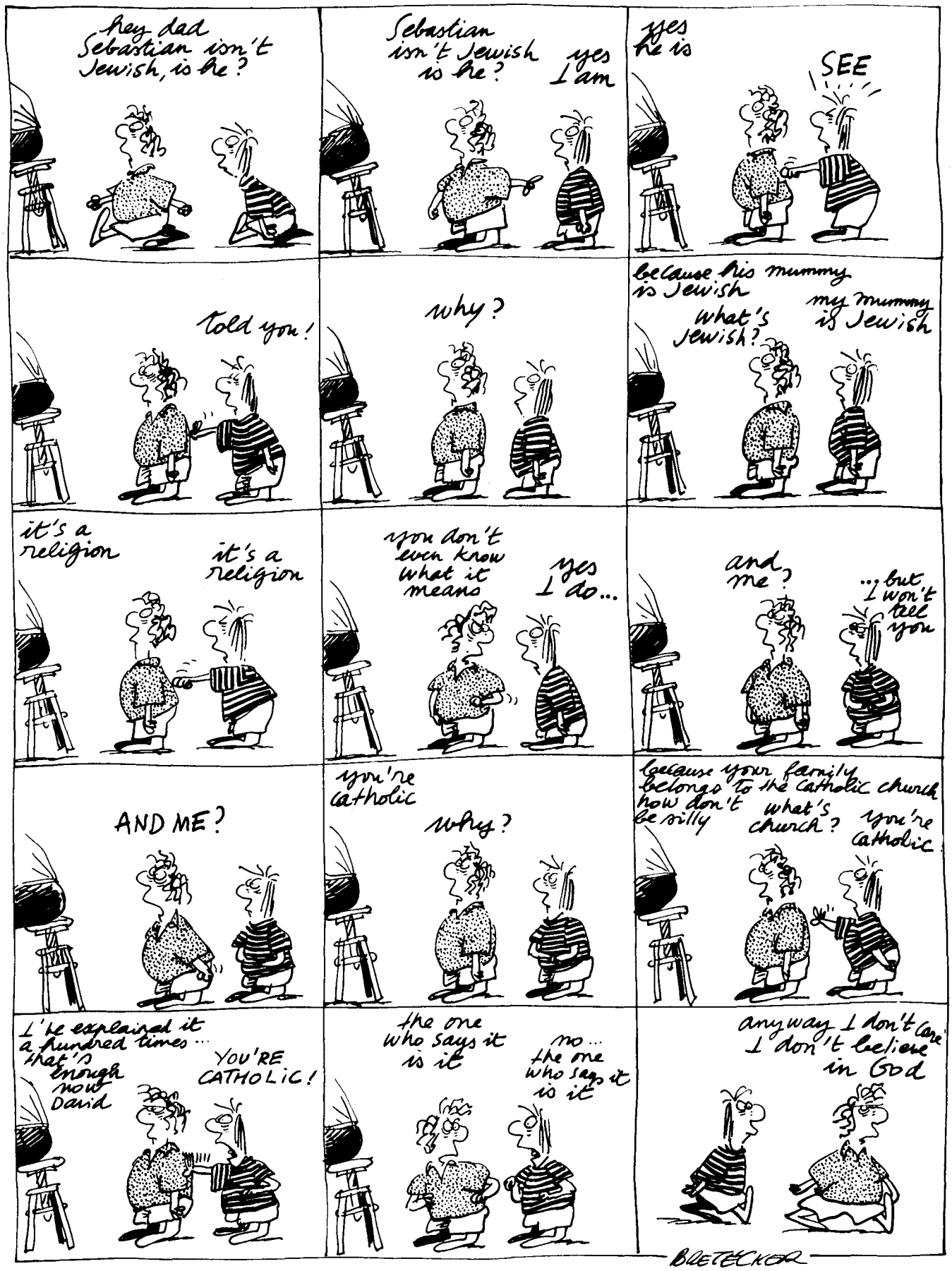
# BRETECHER

## BELIEVERS



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# LETTERS

## Not so radical

*Philip Hobsbaum, Reader in English Literature, University of Glasgow*

The sub-heading of Colin MacCabe's article 'Blueprint for democratic schools' (*NS*, 9 Sept.) called it 'a radical approach'. I cannot see what is radical about a proposal to bring back grammar schools with an examination at 14+. How would the entrance competition proposed by MacCabe work? Enough mistakes were made in the days of the 11+, as I had occasion to point out in your columns back in 1957 when I was a teacher in a pioneer comprehensive school. Basic literacy is the right of all our children: it is unclear to me how MacCabe's scheme would cater for his 14+ rejects. Obviously they cannot exist on a diet of 'punk', which is a good deal less spontaneous and more commercialized than McCabe's approbatory remarks seem to imply.

So far from being radical, Professor McCabe's proposal resembles nothing so much as that of C. B. Cox in his pamphlet *Education: The Next Decade* published by the Conservative Political Centre in 1981. Professor Cox suggested a kind of specialist high school which would select 'high-flyers' at 11 or 12 or in some cases 13. I warm to the concern about the present lamentable condition of state education that is felt both by the socialist MacCabe and the conservative Cox. What I doubt is the practicality of failing to educate their 14+ (or 11+) rejects.

## Abortion in Canada

*Sarah McKenzie, Abingdon, Oxon.*

As a Canadian settled in England, I was intrigued to read Katie Campbell's report on the continued hounding of Dr Henry Morgentaler (*NS* 9 Sept.). I was still in Canada in the early seventies, and well remember his imprisonment pending a successful appeal. This lasted 10 months, by the way, but surprisingly his campaign has not enjoyed the support of the rather indecisive Canadian women's movement, a fact which Ms Campbell failed to point out.

If Dr Morgentaler *is* acquitted, Canadian women will have much to be grateful for, but little to congratulate themselves about.

## Blackpool lights

*Claire Walsh, Editor,* Telegraph, *The Merchant Navy & Airline Officers Association*

It's a pity your man in Blackpool (Miscellany, 9 Sept.) allowed himself to get so tired.

He should have known that, since the results of the TUC General Council elections were not due until late on the Tuesday afternoon, at least three of the labour reporters present were collecting information about *all* the candidates for the contested seats during the morning. This is on the basis that it would be used if the candidate were successful and dropped if not: just the basis on which they were supplied with information about the MNAOA general secretary, Eric Nevin. It's as simple as that.

Are you always so credulous? You have published an arrogant, offensive little report that is inaccurate and garbled on every count. It manages to get not only the name of the general secretary wrong but also that of the union concerned. Yet a moment's thought – or a quick check – should have told you that there is no such organisation as the 'Merchant Navy and Airline Pilots Association'.

In the same issue Francis Beckett writes about the difficulty people in the trade union movement have in differentiating between journalists who should be sympathetic to their aims and 'the *Sun* journalist, paid to pillory'. It's ironic to see the *New Statesman* opt for the *Sun* role.

## Choose your alternatives

*Michael Deakin, Director of Programmes, TV-am*

I don't know that TV-am has done to deserve the sideways swipe that you gave it in the course of your leader regretting the passing of Friday Alternative (*NS* 2 Sept.), but, as we are fast learning, popularity with the paying public has its own peculiar rewards with the rest of the media.

It is, however, simply not true that we have unilaterally torn up our IBA franchise. On the contrary, we anxiously attempt to fulfil it to the best of our abilities in the financial condition in which TV-am finds itself. Maybe I have the advantage over your leader writer who does not seem to have read our franchise application, since I was in part its author, but what we actually promised was 'a popular newspaper in all its facets from its front page to the last pages'. We all undertook to make several hours of children's programmes during the holiday periods – hence Roland Rat. On the more serious side, in the last week our 'front news pages' have covered events ranging from the TUC conference to the Space Shuttle, from live coverage of Reagan's speech on the 747 to the Labour leadership race.

It is true, however, that we are concerned to save our shareholders' money. TV-am is a commercial company and a bankrupt television station serves no useful purpose, while incidentally putting 350 people out of work – something to which our high-minded critics seem curiously indifferent.

But above all, may I urge you to consider that we did not choose the parameters within which the breakfast television ratings battle is being fought. The publicly funded and infinitely resourced BBC were permitted to start breakfast television before us, and they chose the area of competition for the audience without which breakfast television is simply not viable.

In the end what is most galling for us is to be lectured for transmitting a 'safe diet of pap' by the *New Statesman*, which in its current issue offers enlightenment for its readers on 'Survival Forms of "Little Red Riding Hood" in Modern Society', and proffers, to those who are still upright after the experience, 'Holidays in Cuba, including friendship meetings on the crises in Central America'.

## Unqualified architects

*Ian Cooper, Cambridge*

I have found it impossible not to respond to the President of the Royal Institute of British Architects' partial and disingenuous reply (*NS* 26 August) to Jules Lubbock's article.

In his letter, Michael Manser argued that introduction of formal training and qualification of architects was 'demanded by society to protect itself from untrained practitioners'. He chose not to suggest that pressures for such training and qualification came specifically from architects themselves as a means of protecting their status, and of regulating access to, as well as controlling the size of, their occupational group.

In support of his interpretation of history, Manser referred to the Architects' Registration Acts which he described as having 'restricted the title "architect" to those so qualified'. But even a cursory examination of the pages of Hansard shows that the intentions behind these Acts were much wider than this. For example, they included protection of the public from those qualified as architects as well as from those who do not possess that title. And, as my colleagues Iain Campbell, Anne Delaney and I have sought to show before, nowhere is the frustration of this intention more evident than on the Architects' Registration Council's Board of Architectural Education. In return for granting architects a protected title, Parliament legislated so that their education should be firmly in the control of the public, not the profession. But, over the years, this intention has been frustrated by the RIBA, whose members now hold about two-thirds of the places allocated under the 1931 Act to the Board's statutory nominees. This situation is neither healthy for the future of architectural education in Britain, which has become professionally myopic, nor is its continuation in the public interest.

## Jews, zionists and anti-semites

*Sidney Goldwater, Association of Jewish Ex-Servicemen and Women, London N16*

The transparent prejudice apparent in Dahl's review of 'God Cried' makes further comment superfluous. However, when the virulence of a commentary on events in the Lebanon is applied in the face of all known facts, to the record of Anglo Jewry in the Armed Forces of the Crown, it is necessary to put the lie to the ravings of a rabid anti-semite.

It is a matter of sadness and regret to Anglo Jewry in general, and to the Association of Jewish Ex-Servicemen and Women in particular, that 40 years on with the facts and figures of the 60,000 Jews who served in the British Armed Forces in World War II, and the numerous awards for gallantry which they won up to and including the Victoria Cross so well documented and so easily available, it should still be necessary to enter the correspondence columns of respectable journals in this way.

When one thinks of our comrades who made the supreme sacrifice and who lie under headstones bearing the Star of David in war cemeteries spread over world-wide theatres of operations, it is impossible to feel anything but contempt for those who like Dahl seek to traduce their memory.

Not even the Jewish martyrs of Hitler's Europe are spared Dahl's insensate hatred. For those concerned with the truth the fact and extent of Jewish resistance in the death camps have been exactly recorded. The reasons why so many went unresisting to their death under the Nazis' monumental edifice of deception and in the face of an overwhelming and dehumanising system have also been objectively and exhaustively analysed.

It was too much to hope in 1945 that the death of Hitler saw the end of his supporters and his ideas. Is it too much to expect that by 1983 journals of the reputation of the *New Statesman* should have ceased to provide a platform for these hatefuls and hideous lies (*NS* 2 Sept.)?

**Ed. note:* We are happy to publish the above letter. But Mr Goldwater seems to be under a misapprehension. What we printed was a news story about a disgraceful episode which, as we said, has 'outraged the Jewish community'. Exposing Dahl's anti-Semitism is not the same thing as 'providing him with a platform' – which the *NS* has not and would not do.



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Bernard Crick

# The gad-fly and the eagle

**Nations and Nationalism**
ERNEST GELLNER *Basil Blackwell*
£12.50 & £4.95

It speaks well for editorial boldness as well as scholarship that Justin Wintle's *Makers of Modern Culture* had an entry for Gellner, who has made important and original contributions to knowledge in philosophy, sociology and anthropology, but himself finds it hard to know when to wear the crown of a modern master and when the mask of a perpetual *enfant terrible*. Sometimes he is the gad-fly that stings the soft belly and at others the eagle that soars high and looks far.

This is the first book in a promising new series, another brave attempt 'to examine broad issues which are constantly touched upon in historical study but rarely examined directly', and to get specialists to write for the non-specialist. The general editor, R. I. Moore, could not have found a more versatile specialist for the difficult task of getting a modern reader to imagine what a flourishing world was like without either nationalism or nation states, and of explaining how all this changed so very recently in human history. All Gellner lacks is much interest in the history either of ideas or of politics: these he tends to see as 'banana skin' explanations of fundamental social conditions. He mocks Marxism but not for reducing both ideas and accounts of social change to prior economic conditions, rather for identifying the wrong conditions.

The history of the modern world and the formation of modern consciousness is a history of nations and not of classes.

Gellner attacks three false theories of the origins of nationalism. The first is the myopic belief that nationalism 'is natural and self-generating', that the history of the world before the modern nation state was a history of the suppression of an immanent tendency (*pace* Hegel). The second is that nationalism is 'an artificial consequence of ideas which did not need ever to be formulated': romantic doctrines of *community* as the source of moral values (*pace* Rousseau) led to the invention of the idea (says Elie Kedourie, hating it) that for every nation there must be a state, and that that was the only stable basis of order – neither religion, inheritance, law, tradition, reason nor welfare. And third:

> The Wrong Address Theory favoured by Marxism: just as the extreme Shi'ite Muslims hold that Archangel Gabriel made a mistake, delivering the Message to Mohamed when it was intended for Ali, so Marxists basically like to think that the spirit of history or human consciousness made a terrible boob. The message was intended for *classes*, but by some terrible postal error was delivered to *nations*. It is now necessary for revolutionary activists to persuade the wrongful recipient to hand over the message to the rightful and intended recipient.

That is a fair old taste of what you are in for. Gellner proceeds most of the time through *reductio ad absurdum*, setting up what he likes to call 'models' (i.e. cock-shies). He overdoes it. The pompous and the humourless may not notice that their heads have been cut off unless (a) you do it with ritual formality and (b) you tell 'em so in polysyllables. He is over-fond of paradox and whimsical invented examples about Ruritania and blue men. I hate blue men. But the basic thesis is clear and serious.

In agrarian, pre-industrial societies elites alone shared a common culture, a 'high culture' of literacy. Indeed this culture frequently made them mobile between states. The peasantry was largely illiterate and their culture, language and dialects were highly local. Industrialism created the need for universal literacy and for occupational and geographical mobility within a large market area in which a common culture was developed. It was this homogeneous society which, Gellner asserts, needed to foster nationalism. National identity was required to replace the older, complex and yet habitual and instinctive worlds of plural and local loyalties. Everyone else has put the cart before the horse: asserting that ideas of nationalism created a unified society, rather than being a response to it. Loyalties of tribe and kin were antithetical to the market and to demands for specialisation and common education. 'The monopoly of legitimate education is now more important, more central, than is the monopoly of violence', says the gad-fly. The characteristics of our new national societies are 'homogeneity, literacy and anonymity', says the eagle; that is, individuals are interchangeable, there are no *rigid* internal hierarchies of status – 'com-

Mary Evans Picture Library

**Napoleonic contradictions**



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pared with agrarian society, this society is mobile and egalitarian'.

In a very *broad* historical perspective, this is so – even if Gellner gives cavalier treatment to possible examples of pre-industrial national states and of post-industrial multinational states (the United Kingdom, for instance?). But how rigid is rigid, how mobile mobile and how egalitarian egalitarian? His attack on the centrality of *class* in modern society is strong only in so far as he contrasts it with what is virtually *caste* in his *a priori* model of agrarian society. He anticipates with a flip aside the obvious objection that Rome was an agrarian society whose power depended on a degree of openness and mobility in the ruling élite, a lack of inhibition about taking in ability from below and outside: 'the Romans did not exactly rush about offering Roman citizenship', but nor did capitalists rush about preaching equality. In attacking Kedourie's view of nationalism as an invented ideology that threatens tradition, custom, law and order (Balkanisation, Africanisation, arbitrary boundaries in the sand rather than even-handed alien justice), and in also attacking Marxists' intellectual confusion over nationalism but their political indulgence of it, Gellner commits on a massive scale the fallacy of the excluded middle.

If he is talking *only* about nationalism, fair enough; but the book is a bold attempt to grasp the uniqueness of the modern world in terms of nationalism. Now indeed, it may not be sensible to think, as did 18th-century *philosophers*, that a just constitution is all any area of government needs; or that the workers of the world will ever come to see that they have more in common with each other than with their fellow nationals who own the chains. But if the modern state was founded on nationalism, it is unlikely to thrive by nationalism. Nationalism may be a necessary condition of modernity, but it is far from a sufficient condition. In *Thought and Consciousness* Gellner said that there were only two viable principles of political legitimacy in the modern world: that rulers must be co-cultural with the ruled (i.e. nationalism) and that Gross National Product must increase. This new book seems to have thrown out Baby GNP with its bath water. If we reject a facile economic determinism, then we need to pay more attention not less to specific economic factors. And, since Gellner naturally does not endorse everything done in the name of nationalism, nor think that every nation can ever be a state (too many nations still queue up on each other's toes on the door-step of history), he should tell us more about nationalisms and nationalisms, and the wide range of political options *within* the nation state. Nationalism is not objectionable in itself, only when (so frequently) leaders say that options are not available for national or nation-building reasons.

Also there is no discussion of nationalism and racialism, the myth of common culture contrasted with the myth of common blood. And if nationalism was not an invention, the speed of its spread surely owed much to Napoleon and the tactics of the dynasties in popularising resistance to him. Some contingencies are important. Our basic dilemmas still mirror the Napoleonic contradictions of nationalism, the rights of man, democracy, equality of opportunity and egalitarianism. So here are brilliant, provocative and irritatingly incomplete notes towards what could have been a great book. Is it unfair or unwise to ask for more? □

## FICTION
Grace Ingoldby

# Ogres

**Mrs Donald**
MARY KEENE *Chatto* £7.95 & £3.50
**Good Night Sweet Ladies**
CAROLINE BLACKWOOD *Heinemann* £7.95
**The Proprietor**
ANN SCHLEE *Macmillan* £8.95
**Scandal**
A. N. WILSON *Hamish Hamilton* £8.95

The soft words 'mother' and 'home' are contorted in the late Mary Keene's novel almost beyond recognition, for the widowed Mrs Donald is a bully, a braggart and child-beater, and home is nothing short of hell. Set in the East End in the Twenties, **Mrs Donald** explains which children escape and how, and works best beyond the ogre's obsessively clean front step – where her children flinch and cringe, flying into frantic spates of domestic activity to curry favour from a mother who is almost mad, a mother in whom extreme and opposite emotions arise and subside with a dreadful swiftness. It concentrates particularly on the saintly, 'Smike-like' Rose, the child whose innocence perfects her mother's guilt, whose very face and form make her hands 'ache to lay hold'.

But if Mrs Don is one of fiction's great ogres she is also one of the most roundly drawn, the strength of the novel lying firmly in Keene's ability to provoke sympathy for the devil, to allow Mrs Donald a hideous but undeniable dignity showing her not merely wretched with guilt or fear of retribution, but also as she subsides into states of almost sensuous calm after the blows have been struck. The novel, written in the 1950s, is edited by Keene's daughter Alice Thomas Ellis, and includes an epilogue which tells the author's own story – adding a final chill, of experience recollected for what it really was, to an already forceful fiction.

Caroline Blackwood's characters are a neatly observed group of humans, vain, selfish and self-deluding, who peep at the truth about themselves and then quietly, quickly, close the door. They are great betrayers of themselves, their animals and each other, and stylish inventors of strategies which just enable them to circumnavigate the truth. Taft, the social worker, protects himself from intimacy ('as a lover he merely obliged') by the invention of the tragic loss of his wife, which always gets him out of a hole; Mrs Burton can persuade herself that a dinner appointment is more important than a dying dog. Such strategies invite prodigious guilt which in several instances is quite enough to put the characters off their food. Mrs Burton cannot even face her soup, which appears as a dangerous lake into which she must dive to save her croutons. She doesn't dive but watches hopelessly as the last sinking square of bread appears first as her mother (waving?) and then as her dying dog. **Good Night Sweet Ladies** is very funny and the writing, as always, is stylish and close to the bone, but there is a sense in this collection that perhaps this time she might have gone just a little further than she has. Her vision is, one suspects, blacker than she is yet prepared to admit – almost as if Saul, having seen the light on the road to Damascus, decided, disappointingly, to keep it to himself.

**The Proprietor,** set in Victorian times, concerns Augustus Walmer's worthy endeavour to put his Utilitarian principles into practice on the islands of St Warna and The Gweal and includes all the goodies of the romantic period tale: the blue line of the sea obscuring treacherous rocks, the hostile natives, a lighthouse (perilously visited), a beautiful child saved from shipwreck, a married woman – and Walmer, the proprietor, isolated as much by personality as rank . . . What Schlee makes of all this falls somewhere between Lawrence and Du Maurier, far more than the expected quizzically craggy eyebrows or turbulent emotions stirred by the storm-tossed Cornish coast. Though perhaps a little short on humour it is written with great fluency and insight, creating a close weave that really begs a slow, attentive read. Honour, duty and position torture Schlee's Victorians into paroxysms of private despair; eyes meet but bonnets are not tossed. The fair Amelia stuck with Pontefract will 'touch her husband's shoulder from habit, incline her head towards his as far as her bonnet would permit'.

Really it is nature that has the fine, last word: only in the single week of neap-tide when one can walk from one island to the other can forbidden love and social mobility have their head. For the rest it is restraint, resolution and the dreaded stiff upper lip. Walmer's garden and not his principles are his memorial, a magic place alive with birds and hectic blossoms; 'the blue line of the sea appears among the dry incessant business of the place, so reminiscent of his restlessness.'

If Schlee is a hand-stitcher Wilson is very much an 'iron-on' man, but it is not the speed so much as the painless, trouble-free nature of **Scandal** that really accounts for its downfall. Wilson is slick, his ironing quite competent, so that he only slips up once or twice in his race to the end; one girl's face is 'profoundly round' and, oh dear, another's is 'profoundly oval'. His sub-Murdochian plot cracks along and slots together very well; but as Wilson is only prepared to sketch, so reluctant to get involved with his characters in any depth, it is impossible to give a hoot for any of them. □



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## RACKETS
Guglielmo Ranocchio

# Family pride

**A Man of Honour**
JOSEPH BONANNO *Deutsch* £9.95
**The Biggest Game in Town**
A. ALVAREZ *Deutsch* £8.95

Do not call him Joe Bananas. He is Joseph Bonanno; this is a very different word, Bonanno. A word which commands respect, respect for his Tradition. It is like the word *mafioso*. The newspapers use this now for cheap hoodlums, for any scum. Joseph Bonanno is not cheap. And *mafioso* is a proud Sicilian word: it means spirited, brave, keen, beautiful, vibrant and alive, all of these things.

Listen. He was brought up to be a man of honour, a man who can quote from famous books. Machiavelli, Thucydides: these he has read, and read again. They are part of Tradition. You want an example of *mafioso* Tradition, take this one. In 1282, a young lady, a virgin, was raped by a French soldier in Palermo. Her mother cried out, *Ma fia!* My daughter! Her boyfriend found the soldier, killed him with his knife. Don Bonanno and his amanuensis Sergio Gelli have this to say of the incident:

> Scholars now consider parts of the story to be legend or folklore. That may be true, but so what? The important element is not its factual veracity, but the Sicilian spirit which it exemplifies. It speaks to me to this day of the living ideals of personal honour, personal justice and personal dignity.

Personal. This is the fine adjective, with many connotations.

He has led a fine life. He cried as a child. His father said, 'Be proud; you are a Bonanno.' He stopped crying. He beheld – this is a fine verb – his uncle horsewhip his young follower, and then have him whip him back. (Actually, he did not behold this, but he heard of it). It was to see how well the acolyte took a beating. His mother spanked him; he loved her more. He was against Mussolini. He could remember poetry, easily. And he had good-looking legs. He could have been an actor, but it was too easy. The bootlegging was better.

It is a lie to say he worked for Capone. He fought Capone (which means a castrated male chicken)! And then, later, there was peace. Capone had Chicago, the other side had the rest. The violence associated with Capone: this is an irrelevance. The Family had a very strict code of conduct, very strict indeed.

Bonanno has been much maligned. When Valachi spilled his beans, it was a case of saving his own skin with lies. And the FBI were fools. They collected Bonanno's garbage! They read that he reminded himself to 'call Titone and pay *scannatore*'. This they interpret as the Don paying a hit-man! Because *scannare* is Italian for 'slaughter'! But, in Sicilian dialect, a *scannatore* is a chopping-board, and the Don wished only to repay its maker. The FBI were dumb.

He loved his wife even before he met her. He became a friend – like Richard Nixon, although he is too modest to claim it – of that great evangelist Billy Graham. Yet he is written off by the media as the inspiration for *The Godfather*. This is true, why should he deny it? Why did the people of America flock to see this film? To see a man with cotton-wool in his cheeks? To watch James Caan clump someone with a dust-bin lid, before being brutally ventilated? Or to watch a man with spectacles being shot through the eye? Don Bonanno sets the record straight:

> This work of fiction is not really about organised crime or gangsterism. The true theme has to do with family pride and personal honour . . . It portrayed people with a strong sense of kinship trying to survive in a cruel world.

They have given me also this book by Al Varez to report upon. He has written this all himself, he has had no Sergio Gelli. He lets his poker-players in Las Vegas speak for themselves. Like Don Bonanno, he has a phenomenal ear for memory of speech, unless he has a tape-recorder. He is also a man of learning. He has read Nietzsche, as the Don has read Machiavelli:

> 'What makes the heroic?' asked Nietzsche, and answered himself: 'to go to meet simultaneously one's greatest sorrow and one's greatest hope.'

This is a fine speech to salute the fat cats of Las Vegas, the mathematicians and the lead-lidded drunks who play the tables. But Varez is too much obsessed, I think, with money. His style lights up when he is describing it: in wads, or translated into chips. Don Bonanno had no need of such triviality, as he notes:

> I rarely had to pay money (although I often did anyway) for many of my mundane needs . . . Restaurant owners were available to dine me, barbers to clip me, tailors to suit me, doctors to cure me . . .

Varez describes one Nick the Greek, who lost five million dollars in one game of five months. As Nick the Greek says, 'The next best thing to gambling and winning is gambling and losing.' Mr Varez reports this with dignity, noting that the Greek died broke on Christmas Day, 1966. I do not think Nick the Greek was too *mafioso*, unlike Mr Varez. It is not enough that Mario Puzo visits the casino. Some of the men he describes are bloated. They eat cream-cakes, and they sweat. This is not *mafioso*, to sweat. But still, their wives, whether 'sitting glumly' by, or keeping acounts at home, they are taken care of. Varez quotes Bobby Baldwin:

> Family and wife and kids . . . give you the motivation to be strong and solid, to have backbone, heart, fortitude . . . They give you a purpose in life.

This is a noble sentiment, but the gamblers are poor in spirit. Don Varez does not seem to see this, or else his irony is too subtle. The man who writes on the dustjacket of *A Man of Honour* speaks of the 'dizzying ambiguities of its viewpoint'. Myself, I have not found these problems, in either of these books. □

Eugene Dubnov

## Autumn

The world is a house
As cold as ice:
Impossible to keep warm.

Behind the wall
An old man trembles
Between white sheets.

I am slowly freezing
In this crypt of a house.
Can *he* survive?

I hear his rasping cough;
No medicine can help him now.
Winter is closing in.

## BIOGRAPHY
Robert Hutchison

# Off-beat

**Inside Outsider: The Life and Times of Colin MacInnes**
TONY GOULD *Chatto* £12.50

I thought that a jumble was an afternoon in a church hall among dead men's trousers until I discovered Colin MacInnes (1914-1976): 'What is a Jumble? You are, and I, if we are white. The word's a corruption of John Bull, and is used by West Africans of Englishmen in a spirit of tolerant disdain.' 'A Short Guide for Jumbles' was published in *Twentieth Century* in 1956, and what is perhaps MacInnes's best-known novel, *City of Spades*, came out the following year. Montgomery Pew, the innocent-at-home Jumble of *City of Spades*, admits to becoming 'what Americans call a nigger-lover . . . because they bring an element of joy and fantasy and violence into our cautious ordered lives.'

MacInnes, who was always on the lookout for joy and fantasy and violence, was a gay Australian-reared Scot, whose parents divorced when he was three. His mother, the popular novelist Angela Thirkell, was the grand-daughter of Edward Burne-Jones, and Rudyard Kipling and Stanley Baldwin were first cousins twice removed. Stanley Baldwin scarcely features in this 'life and times', but Tony Gould is skilful at suggesting the family traits woven into MacInnes's character and the influences against which he was in lifelong revolt. Trying to shock his mother seems to have given extra zap to his writing.

As with Orwell – and the comparison



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might bear drawing in some detail – much of the raw material of MacInnes's dozen or so novels was very directly autobiographical. He had a fascination for forbidden fruit, and was much given to boasting of his sexual conquests – which, he claimed, included the entire police force at a place in North Germany. His *penchant* for black boys received a great boost when an American company of black dancers ('quite extraordinary: like innocent orchids') visited London in 1952. Just as *City of Spades* was born out of a combative negrophilia, *Absolute Beginners* (1959) was fuelled by its author's astonishing empathy with the 1950s young. But in Tony Gould's judgement MacInnes, like Orwell, was a better essayist than novelist. MacInnes acknowledged his debt to Orwell, but considered that Orwell's critical imagination was as superb as his 'creative' imagination was deficient.

MacInnes was a painter with the Euston Road school in the 1930s and an art critic thereafter, and he knew the advantages of having a trained eye. Few people had a warmer appreciation of the splendid and unusual achievement of Nikolaus Pevsner. In an essay published in 1960, MacInnes described how he had, 'in Dr Pevsner's wake, perambulated around a good part of the streets whose buildings are described in the two London books. The effort left me wonderstruck.' It was not only Pevsner's staggering productivity and stylistic accomplishments that MacInnes celebrated but also his 'quite extraordinary penetration as a sociologist of the English scene'. MacInnes too was hard-working, took pride in his identity as a penetrator of the English scene, and once claimed to be 'the best off-beat journalist in London'; but his enthusiasm for Pevsner derived partly from his recognition of a fellow 'inside outsider' or cultivated stranger.

Tony Gould brings marvellously to life this exceptionally gifted cat who walked alone. His book is a pleasure. □

## CULTURE
Simon North

# Hidden dogma

**The Empire's Old Clothes**
ARIEL DORFMAN *Pluto* £4.95

There was a World Service programme recently (perhaps it's a regular feature) on which three men discussed importantly the comparative virtues of megahertz and kilohertz wavelengths. You might think a political analysis of *Babar the Elephant* promises to be as boring – a product of the academic tradition that takes too literally Blake's maxim about finding a world in a grain of sand. However, Ariel Dorfman's exposition of popular literature, not just Babar but *The Lone Ranger*, Donald Duck and *Reader's Digest*, is nothing of the sort. Not only is it wittily and entertainingly written; it is also extremely interesting.

Dorfman quickly dispels the notion, if the reader harbours it, that children's literature is all harmless fun and that politics can't possibly be a part of its innocent universe. Of course, the idea that it can't is naive, or even arrogant, for just as the coded expression of a world view can be sought by anthropologists in the language and rituals of 'undeveloped' countries, so it can be found within aspects of our own culture. In this way Dorfman contributes to the same development of self-awareness as the feminist exploration of language, which has made visible the previously invisible male orientation of the way we speak and write – a development which potentially liberates us from those semi-conscious tyrannies of thought that trip up and inhibit conscious effort towards personal and social change.

The author is an exiled Chilean socialist living (ironically) in the USA. He sees the huge export of American popular literature to countries like his own as a form of colonisation. This is the perspective from which he introduces the book. Three essays then follow, in which Babar and Donald Duck, *The Lone Ranger* and *Reader's Digest* are scrutinised. By exploring the texts, plots and evolution of the comics, he holds a mirror up to the moral, economic and geographical assumptions of the society that has produced them.

He perceives in *Reader's Digest* (a tourist guide-book for the geography of ignorance)

**The Price of Victory**

MICHAEL CHARLTON

**A remarkable account of Britain's diplomacy in Europe after the Second World War recalled by surviving British Prime Ministers, Foreign Secretaries, Cabinet Ministers and political advisers. Michael Charlton explains how and why Britain lost the leadership of Europe after 1945, and assesses the 'missed opportunities' of British diplomacy culminating in our exclusion from the EEC in 1963.**

**FROM BOOKSELLERS** **£10.75**

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a continuation of the rose-tinted cosmos of children's comics in which the unknown and the foreign can be reduced to the well-known, the simple, the close at hand. Those who are sceptical, frightened, or moved by a faint desire to connect cause and effect are reassured, excluded or anathematised. Meanwhile, the omissions and distortions of 'industrially produced literature' represent a consistent avowal of American ideals and ethnocentric attitudes, altering over the years only in the details of its self-image.

In the last essay Dorfman relates how a comic-strip story allegorised the downfall of Allende, as it occurred, in the defeat of a monster-tyrant called Ferjus. The example demonstrates that, as well as the unconscious infusions, conscious and historical forces are also at work in children's literature. Earlier he quotes from *'The Lone Ranger:* Standards and Background', a document (which amounts to a manifesto) published by the owners and creators of the masked hero in the 1930s: 'Property is the fruit of labor; that some should be rich shows that others may become rich and hence is encouragement to industry and enterprise.'

Dorfman is against dogma and for imagination. Nowhere in the book does he ridicule or condemn those who read the stuff he analyses with such mischievous acuity; but he recognises the importance of undermining its power with imaginative alternatives and criticism. Generalised feelings of resistance against the reactionary doctrines of our culture need to be particularised if they are not to lead simply to a condition of impotent aggression. It is to this process of particularising that Dorfman contributes.

Energised by his passion and unrelenting insight, you look up from the book feeling better able to understand the insidious ubiquity of the status quo, its intimate processes and methods, its neighbourly disguises and indoctrinations. □

## PAPERBACKS
Alan Brien

# Slow killers

IN ANY NON-FICTION bestseller list, especially of paperbacks, three of the top ten tend to be diet books. Each new regime – as with South American dictatorships – drives out its predecessor. The latest sells as many as, if not more than, the one before, apparently to the same buyers. Since the basic recipe can be codified on the back of an envelope, they have to be written in a deliberately attenuated style, releasing a new pellet of advice with every chapter, like clues in Agatha Christie.

Fred Rohé's **The Complete Book of Natural Foods** (Routledge £7.95) recommends itself instantly by being no skinny, faddist's manual but a jolly, fat, combative eater's encyclopaedia, jogging on for 491 pages, plus eight appendices. It does advocate a sort of diet, but an omnivorous menu that outlaws only non-foods – anything junky, fast, convenience-packaged; anything with chemical additives, or supposedly vitamin and mineral-'enriched'; anything refined or processed by dubious or cruel methods; anything subjected to mass-production techniques or to any manufacturing methods except of the most simple, traditional kind.

Foods that have had harmful ingredients removed are equally condemned along with those that have nutritious extras interpolated. Warning against a high coffee intake ('a slow form of suicide'), he also rejects the de-caffeinated alternatives. Until recently, he reminds us, several brands used as their solvent a petrol-based substance, now a proved carcinogen: 'If something is de-caffeinated, or de anything else, we need to ask – what is it de-ed *with?*'

Even cow's milk alone, to most of us still the epitome of natural food, is on his condemned list. Pasteurisation is denounced as a half-boiled compromise, guaranteed to destroy all vitamin A, almost half of B, a fifth of iodine, most other enzymes and proteins, while leaving the calcium residue in the form most difficult to assimilate. Skimmed is little better, drastically reducing the butter-fat essential to the process of absorption.

Rohé's handbook is full of such surprises. Even the most notorious contemporary killer, fat, should not be shunned in favour of harmful substitutes, with butter always preferred to margarine: 'If you don't eat cholesterol, your body will produce it; if you eat it, your production will slow down.' Swapping over to poly-unsaturates cannot reduce the level of something as necessary to your protection as wax polish to your car.

As a moderate smoking, regular boozing, middle-aged free-lance in a stressful profession, I am not Fred Rohé's ideal reader. I will be fortunate to find any diet which enables me to live long enough to finish his tome. A high tolerance for strong drink is no proof it's not shortening your life – the well-nourished person can't hold his liquor; moreover, he doesn't want to. But, dipping here and there, I found it a provocative, illuminating, sometimes self-contradictory repository of all, if not more, that I ever wanted to know about food. It is hard to resist anyone who hammers home the message: if it hasn't got a taste and smell you recognise, don't eat it.

Rohé does not push any political line, but he demonstrates that what is insinuated down our throat is designed for the advantage and profit of marketers not consumers. If there is any convenience, it is theirs not ours. Our current diet is governed by the demands of the conveyor belt, ease of distribution, and shelf-life, not by the needs of the human body.

Nicholas Hildyard's revised and up-dated edition of his **Cover Up** (New English Library £2.95) displays no such inhibitions. The chapter headings give the subjects of scandal and concern he investigates and documents with damning detail – 'Asbestos: The Slow Killer', 'The Pesticide Conspiracy', 'Thalidomide and After', 'Acid Rain: The Poison from the Skies', 'Lead: The Poison in our Petrol'. But his point is not that these things happen, but that when they do, the firms who make money out of risking their workers' lives and their customers' health, ignoring often already inadequate safety regulations, then mount sophisticated and cunning diversionary operations to keep the truth from the public.

He describes how they use public relation firms to tell lies, obstruct or manipulate the media, delay investigation by legal process, call in the police and security services to protect what they allege are national secrets, even descend to criminal acts of violence. The sub-title of the book is 'The Facts They Don't Want You To Know'. The rest provides the implicit corollary, 'And How They Stop You Knowing Them'.

SUCH AN INDICTMENT is not just something dreamed up by left-wing scaremongers. Hildyard quotes a leader in *Lancet,* ten years ago, warning that 'a sinister conspiracy of big industrial manufacturing firms' was deliberately suppressing information about the dangers of chemicals to which all of us are routinely exposed every day. Despite this, it is still difficult to believe that big business can remain so unmoved by the revelations of its own greed and callousness. To take only one example, that Kerr-McGee, the giant nuclear facility company, could permit practices of such insane frivolity as Karen Silkwood monitored: 'A young teenager brought a popgun to work and fired uranium dioxide fuel pellets at his colleagues whenever he got bored.'

Karen's mysterious death can no longer be dismissed as a piece of paranoiac fantasy by anti-nuclear protesters – her estate has already won an award of 10.3 *million* dollars against K-M, and further suits are pending.

Writers and researchers like Hildyard, who feel impelled to criticise and publicise the evils of their country's social system, often emerge as dupes of their own anti-capitalist ideology in Paul Hollander's **Political Pilgrims** (Harper & Row £5.50). It is because they are so obsessed with domestic injustice, he suggests, that they become such easy victims of Communist propaganda about countries like Russia and China. Somewhere there must be a Utopia. If it isn't on the doorstep, it must on the other side of their world. And his book traces many foolish, self-deceiving safaris made by Western intellectuals, from Shaw to Sontag, in vain search of the just land.

It makes valuable therapeutic reading, occasionally funny in a rather sickening way, as we are shown one after the other projecting their visions of revolutionary idealism on bureaucratic dictatorships, often in their most oppressive and brutal phase. But it never seems to occur to Hollander that an equally cautionary history could be extracted from the reports of right-wing egg-heads who have not only turned a blind eye to faults at home but also happily allowed themselves to admire Franco, the Greek colonels and General Pinochet. □



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## Gender, Class and Education

ed. STEPHEN WALKER & LEN BARTON
*Falmer Press* £11.95 & £5.95

Most contributors to the 1982 Westhill Conference on the Sociology of Education would agree that, though they set out to interpret a world of inequality, the point is to *change* it. To this end, 15 researchers have compiled bibliographies of studies in Europe, the United States, Australia and New Zealand, and considered the combined effects of class and gender upon the processes of social reproduction: a pioneering venture.

Madeleine Arnot traces the history and rationale of co-education in both public and private sectors, arguing against the sex-segregation recently advocated by some feminists. Sara Delamont deplores the influence of schools in perpetuating outmoded stereotypes, while Lynn Davies describes girls' strategies for survival and defiance of conventional discipline. Jean Arnot discussed careers and marriage with a hundred fifth-grade pupils, male and female, from privileged and working-class homes, and found simultaneous signs of 'accommodation' and 'resistance' to ideological pressures which were, in any case, often mutually incompatible.

Surveying the division of labour within a 'semi-profession' where traditionally women teach and men manage, Sandy Acker questions the customary explanation that wives lack ambition and so choose to remain on Scale I. Michael Apple shows how the widespread adoption of commercial packages – mass-produced tests, worksheets, and record-cards – in American schools has deskilled, deprived and demoralised teachers. Miriam David's comparative analysis of educational policy and curriculum-development in Britain and the United States suggests that the New Right has succeeded in replacing a nominally egalitarian ideal of opportunity (and jobs) for all with 'authoritarian populism': the promotion of old-fashioned values, contrasting sex-roles, hierarchical standards and disparate rewards for the winners and losers in Nature's race.

If these are indeed the lessons of the recession, if an altered moral consensus has followed a decline of public hopes, so that administrators can axe educational budgets without even paying lip-service to educational claims, then the task of academic critics is all the more pressing. This eclectic compilation does much to challenge the discrimination implicit in institutional practices, popular assumptions and pedagogic theory. Dare we ask for more: a clearer style of exposition, a more substantial economic context, a more purposeful empiricism? What sociologists have to say is sometimes inaudible through their methodological din.

**Marion Glastonbury**

## Literature and Method: Towards a Critique of I. A. Richards, T. S. Eliot and F. R. Leavis

PAMELA McCALLUM *Gill & Macmillan* £20

We have all been taught to regard Eliot, Leavis and Richards as the great prophets of modern criticism, but now a reaction has set in. This book is another attempt to demolish the reputations of the past and the traditions that fostered them.

Pamela McCallum believes that, in their different ways, the three critics failed to reconcile the inconsistences of Arnoldian liberal philosophy. This tradition, she argues, took an over-simplified view of human consciousness and as a result failed to devise an adequate role for modern culture. There was no concerted attempt to investigate the relationship between the individual and society.

This is a perfectly justifiable analysis, though it has precious little to do with the intention stated in the title. McCallum just hasn't grasped the basic problems. The book is hopelessly long for its slender thesis, is swathed in debilitating jargon, and has some sneaky axe to grind which never comes into the open. Moreover, it lacks the necessary historical perspective which would explain why the Big Three seem so alien to us today.

Eliot, Leavis and Richards weren't primarily concerned with the shortcomings of the liberal tradition; they were more bothered by half a century of third-rate belle-lettrism and the need to establish English as a university discipline. Their value, or lack of it, has little to do with human consciousness and everything to do with the fact that times have changed, that cultural problems are different, that once again criticism must find a new vocabulary for the post-modernist age. Two hundred pages of sly superority do not get us to the heart of the matter.

**David Lancaster**

## Rationality and Ritual: The Windscale Inquiry and Nuclear Decisions in Britain

BRIAN WYNNE *British Society for the History of Science* £6.50

This is *not* another book on the Windscale Inquiry, the last before those about Sizewell start to appear; neither is it, primarily, a book on the history of science. It is a detailed analysis of the process rather than the product of nuclear decision-making in Britain in general, and of the Parker Inquiry in particular. The author, who was the local *Network for Nuclear Concern's* amateur advocate throughout the Inquiry, shows how it functioned to disarm the opposition and justify decisions that had already been made.

Yet this is not the 'conspiracy' exposed, but an illustration that the 'hidden hands' of earlier decisions, political 'reality' and establishment ways of thinking meant that the outcome was pre-ordained despite the hapless sincerity of Parker himself and the proponents of the Thermal Oxide Reprocessing Plant (THORP). Brian Wynne's message is that rituals like this are not limited to nuclear issues in political life.

Public participation in Britain with respect to high technology decisions has been kept to a minimum. Many of the earlier nuclear decisions were shrouded in so much secrecy that not even relevant Cabinet Ministers knew of them. This gave way to administrative decisions that were nodded through Cabinet, giving by default a central political role to expertise, thus subsuming political values beneath a cloak of scientific rationality and consensus, therefore convicting opponents in advance of either ignorance or malevolence.

Recognition over the past decades that social attitudes are a constitutive part of scientific knowledge has paralleled, without any necessary causal link, the rise of counter-elites who were prepared to challenge the consensus on scientific grounds in the interest of other values. This all demanded a higher level of knowledge to adjudicate. Control was maintained by finding this in the judicial system with its legal rationality so akin to scientific thought, and consequently with its ideology of 'legalism' sharing so much with 'scientism'. For the former the highest form of politics is that based on legal rules alone, while for the latter the sole arbiter is science, both sweeping casually aside historical and sociological dimensions.

Thus Parker conducted a narrow empirical search for *the truth* to be discovered through the assembling of hard facts, at the expense of any unquantifiable assertions and the objectors' cases. This was done without reference to the broader issues, and with increasing frustration as the adversarial process led away from rather than to the expected consensus. As Wynne says, legal rationality is a degenerate style of politics, intrinsically dictatorial and anti-democratic. Yet we are likely to see more of it as the judiciary is called to the rescue again and again to patch over a crumbling consensus on technical issues.

**Glyn Ford**

## The American Novel and the Way We Live Now

JOHN W. ALDRIDGE *Oxford* £13.50

The debate on the relationship between American life and letters has lasted over 150 years. In that time, Cooper and James maintained that the texture of American society lacked the richness that engenders great literature, while Emerson, Van Wyck Brooks and Tom Wolfe looked vainly for novelists who reflected its marvellous realities. John Aldridge occupies the middle-ground – as have Philip Roth and John Gardner – recognising the inadequacies of contemporary existence, deploring the failure of writers to engage its unrealities. The notion of engagement is important. Aldridge accepts that writers like Pynchon and William Gaddis do present a 'metaphorical and fabulative' reflection of the times; they do not, though, fulfil the traditional function of the novelist: to examine subversively 'the shams and delusions of the prevailing culture'. This must be achieved through realism and the present cultural situation makes it an all the more necessary objective.

Of the 16 writers scrutinised by Aldridge, five have made the considerable effort 'to comment more or less directly and realistically on current social or political issues or to render as faithfully as possible the quality and character of the human condition . . .' Only Mailer and Bellow win approval. Baldwin and Alison Lurie are severely mauled, but still escape lightly compared with Styron (an enduring object of Aldridge's acerbity), who is condemned for shallowness, opportunism, grandiloquence, dullness and racism. But at least all three tried. Aldridge *really* dislikes those irrealists – Donald Barthelme, Robert Coover, Ronald Sukenick – whose fiction he regards as conditioned by a nihilistic ideology: what Bellow has termed 'the commonplaces of the Wasteland outlook'. Such 'post-contemporary' writers have left the world 'so far behind that they can no longer conceive it imaginatively or present it in terms more definite than a vague and disembodied attitude of total disdain'.

This book is enhanced by being part of a significant literary tradition. Echoes of distinguished predecessors recur throughout: there are, for instance, familiar complaints about 'the cult of experience', the lack of ideas, in American fiction. The book's faults, too – selectivity, generalisation, overstatement – are those of the tradition. Except, that is, its slight air of obsolescence. Aldridge does not mention the latest works of over half the writers discussed here, while he has to refer back several years for examples of the 'Wasteland outlook', which has been waning since the late 1970s. To this extent, the book addresses yesterday's controversies.

**David Montrose**



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**FILMS**
John Coleman

# Head to head

**Danton**
(PG) *Chelsea Cinema, King's Road*
**Return Engagement**
(15) *Screen on the Green*
**Psycho II**
(15) *Plaza*
**Man, Woman, and Child**
(PG) *Classics, Haymarket and Oxford Street; Odeons, Kensington, Swiss Cottage and Westbourne Grove*

In the beginning was a play, *The Danton Affair*, written by a neurotic Polish woman, Stanislawa Przybyszewska, with a deep passion for Robespierre and hence heavily biased in his favour. Completed in 1929, it was first performed, in Lwow, two years later; history then left it kicking its heels till 1967 when Andrzej Wajda saw a production in Wroclaw. In 1975 Wajda himself directed the play in Warsaw. One can only assume that he was, at that point, relatively faithful to the original, obsessed text. For the film he has now drawn from it, with a script by Jean-Claude Carrière, manifestly redresses a balance and has met with a cool-to-hostile reception from both officialdom and the press in his home country. This **Danton,** a French-Polish co-production made in France, sets up a head-on confrontation between the earthy, swaggering, oh-so-human Gérard Depardieu in the oratorical title role and Wojciech Pszoniak's chill, sickly and fastidious Robespierre, with Depardieu-Danton a fairly clear winner on points – and not just points for popular machismo but for liberalising flexibility as well. Parallels between Lech Walesa and Jaruzelski are thus there for the taking; and have been taken by this or that faction. Look at the Polish reaction.

Wajda, of course, no one's fool and a superb artist, disclaims such interpretations as facile (bread queues are bread queues anywhere, any time) and certainly his 1793-4 costume drama can stand on its own now stamping, now shuffling feet without benefit of contemporary analogies. On the debit side there are some awkwardnesses. Watching Pszoniak's Polish mouthings dubbed into French becomes an embarrassment; distinguishing who's who during the early reels is harder work than seems warranted; Angela Winkler, as Camille Desmoulins' wife, is risibly invited to lift her bare-bummed baby on high as papa is dragged off. Nor is the ease with which Robespierre sways the Convention (one minute howling for his blood) to his side remotely convincing: suddenly everyone bursts out singing *La Marseillaise*.

Elsewhere, the feel and sounds and look of a Paris in awful turbulence are caught with brilliant economy of means, aided by Igor Luther's often dawn-grim photography and the menace of a metallic score by Jean Prodromides, shifting into weird cacophonies. Spectacle is minimal: crowds swarm down rain-swept alleyways; the Convention in assembly seethes, but well this side of Gance; the court where Danton and his fellows rail against injustice is a packed, almost intimate place. Wajda has rightly chosen to put the emphasis on high moments of chamber drama, effectively on the opposed temperaments of his two protagonists, most marvellously coming together in a near-comic *tête-à-tête* in a private dining room. Depardieu, already half-drunk, makes boisterously futile preparations: 'He only likes blue flowers', he shouts, smacking his lips as

**Depardieu as Danton**

choice dishes are brought in (caper sauce has been re-named 'Convention sauce' and a specially prepared quail likewise 'revolutionised'), turning – as his prim guest enters – to greet him with a great grin of hopeless insincerity, later filling Robespierre's glass mischievously to the brim for a toast 'to our understanding'. The 'incorruptible' has *his* small triumph here, raising the bumper without a tremor: but the last-ditch attempt at an *entente* is doomed.

Wajda's eye for the cruel detail later pulls Robespierre down a sly notch. As he harangues the Convention, with the manic stare of some 18th-century Wedgwood-Benn, the camera dips to his feet, straining on tiptoe to give him stature. And there is a fine, as it were framing irony at the close, after the guillotine has taken its bloody toll of his enemies, where his housekeeper's little brother (shown learning the Articles of the Revolution in an early scene) is ushered in to an ailing and sick-at-heart Robespierre's bedside, proudly to recite the code that is now so much verbiage. Among many excellent faces and performances inevitably those of Pszoniak, finically half-relishing the ministrations of his barbers, regally posing for David, and of lumbering, life-force Depardieu stand out. Depardieu has never been better cast than as this animally cunning but over-confident Danton, sure of his hold on the people ('*la rue*', as he fulminates) and of his powers of oratory, reduced at the last to a prophetic croak: Robespierre too will fall. It's a film that goes on growing in the mind in retrospect, possessed and possessing, a fresh focus on the muddled men who enact what subsequently becomes history. What better way to celebrate the opening of a new cinema on a site with a rich film history of its own?

Alan Rudolph's wickedly if dubiously entertaining **Return Engagement** brings us back with a salutary bump to contemporary vulgarities via another sort of confrontation, or History as Showbiz, being an artful patchwork documentary about the ageing, ineffably complacent ex-Harvard prof and LSD publicist, Timothy Leary, and the appallingly unrepentant Watergate 'plumber', G. Gordon Liddy, on stage and off as they tour the States in tandem, performing their horrific polarities in mock-debate. Leary flatters kids by saying only those born after 1946 know where it's at, advising them to 'Turn on, tune in and *take over*' (used to be 'drop out' – remember?) and recommending computer-games as higher education. Liddy draws simplistic divisions between ethics and jurisprudence, works out to pain-threshold in a gym, and would kill his son if his country demanded it. Watch out, rather, for his acerbic missus at a breakfast session. That this could probably only happen in America is something the viewer must decide whether to applaud or not. My own hope is that it finally defuses two once dangerous idiots.

Given the price of sequels, I suppose **Psycho II** was always on the cards. Surpris-



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ingly, the sheer effrontery – not to say crassness – of such a proceeding is here and there justified in the outcome, written by Tom Holland and directed by the Australian Richard Franklin as his US debut. Cracking off with an abbreviated pre-credits re-run of the shower sequence, it has the extraordinarily youthful-looking Anthony Perkins again as Norman Bates, released after 22 years' remedial treatment (and over the vehement protests of murdered Marion's sister Lila, again played by Vera Miles) to return – where else? – to the Old Dark House and associated motel. Second laugh comes when his friendly doctor, depositing him there, apologises that cutbacks mean there won't be 'a trained social worker to look in on you from time to time'. Norman soon sees someone silhouetted in a window, fires a dirty-minded motel manager, gives house room to a homeless waitress (charming Meg Tilly) at the diner where he is briefly employed, and settles down to another haunting by long-dead Mother and a twisty plot strewn with new corpses. But who *is* 'Mother'? If you can stick with it, there are a few visual harkbacks to the original (a suitcase toppling downstairs like Arbogast's stabbed body), jokes about kitchen knives and an authentically comic-gruesome finale. If . . .

Dick Richard's **Man, Woman and Child,** from a novel by Erich (*Love Story*) Segal, souped up with a lush score, is a would-be tear-jerker about affluent angst: Martin Sheen, an unlikely Californian literary prof, finds a 10-year-old French fling has resulted in a now orphaned son, whom he brings over, to the dismay of wife Blythe Danner (wastefully acting very well) and two cute daughters. New readers, stop here. □

## JAZZ
Charles Fox

# Joy sticks

**Elvin Jones at Ronnie Scott's Club**

Jazz drumming often seems like a higher branch of athletics. Sinews are needed as well as that metronome inside the skull; a capacity for endurance can be as vital as the ability to set hands and feet moving in separate time-signatures. No drummer embodies that combination of the physical and the imaginative more cannily than Elvin Jones who, backed up by his Jazz Machine, will be demonstrating his complex art at Ronnie Scott's until the end of next week.

Jones is, may be, a little fleshier than in the days when he brought to the John Coltrane Quartet a new conception of jazz drumming, a way of allowing a soloist to float as well as sting. Nowadays the emphasis is different. Where Coltrane's group went in for constant interplay, Jones sits out in front of his musicians, his cherry-red jacket and trousers contrasting with their black-and-white, dictating the style, shaping the ambience.

In Pat LaBarbera, frequently a member of his group over the past eight years, Jones has a saxophonist who has tamed Coltrane's ferocity, proffering something rather more sedate, permutating the implications of the chords – but never to their uttermost. LaBarbera's blossoming in Monday's first set came when he launched into a ballad, 'It's Easy To Remember', beginning prettily but quickly spinning off into more muscular patterns.

That ballad also offered the most scope to Jones's other two sidemen, Chip Jackson – a newcomer – on bass, and the guitarist Marvin Horne. Neither projects much sense of identity, although Horne's lanky, slightly dead-pan solos are rescued from blandness by the occasional blues inflexion. Jones showed impeccable tact in this piece, not taking a solo, sticking to brushes, never – until the last few bars – deserting his snare drum.

The evening had begun differently, Jones using his sticks like an African master-drummer, rhythmically insistent yet constantly varying the accents, the stressing. But that taut commencement was followed by the springy chords and intervals of Wayne Shorter's 'Fee-Fi-Fo-Foo', then the ballad, before the first set concluded with a frothy, Caribbean-style tune by McCoy Tyner.

It seemed a pity that Tyner himself could not have been present – or even some lesser pianist, for the guitar never really supplied quite enough harmonic anchorage inside the group. A small quibble, though, when set against the privilege of again witnessing a great drummer brandishing his skills. □

## THEATRE
Stephen Brook

# Crime wave

**Crime and Punishment**
DOSTOEVSKY *Lyric, Hammersmith*
**Molière**
MIKHAIL BULGAKOV *Pit*
**The Genius**
HOWARD BRENTON *Royal Court*

Four years ago, as I walked into the Taganka Theatre in Moscow, I found myself stepping around what appeared to be a bloody corpse obstructing the gangway. The play was Yuri Lyubimov's production of **Crime and Punishment** and it was an unforgettable theatrical experience. This remarkable director is now in London and has recreated his production – complete with corpse and a fine British cast.

The deep black stage is bare of props other than a cluster of doors and traps, and Lyubimov relies heavily on a harsh, bold use of lighting. Hand-held spots pick out the features of the actors, and are sometimes turned on the audience, while strobes give dream and fantasy sequences a quality of nightmare. Even Dunia's gunshot is conveyed by light rather than sound. Although the originality of Lyubimov's loose-limbed but faithful adaptation has been transported intact, the production seems less overwhelming than it had been in Moscow. The Russian actors performed with a feverish intensity that the British cast can't match.

It's a question of styles, not ability. The London cast gives us distinguished acting; the Moscow players emitted raw emotion, of a kind familiar to anyone who's seen Tadeusz Kantor's Polish company. Michael Pennington, although a rather elderly Raskolnikov, plays the intellectualizing young murderer with an eloquence that comes close to undermining Lyubimov's unwillingness to grant Raskolnikov heroic status. Great weight is given to Gary Waldhorn's sleek, cynical Svidrigailov, who scorns Raskolnikov's failure to do more than initiate an act of Napoleonic bravado and self-asser-

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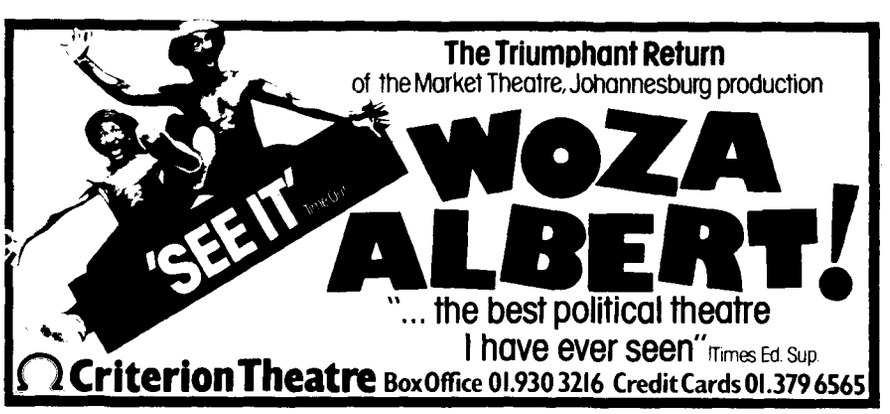
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tion; that failure is uneasily transformed into provisional redemption with the aid of Sonia, besmirched in body but pure in soul, movingly played by a rather too well-bred Veronica Roberts. Bill Patterson displays nimble comic dexterity as Porfiry but risks turning the role into a comic turn.

These are minor flaws in a memorable night at the theatre that should not be missed. Lyubimov's production dominates individual performance, while at the Pit, in another Russian play, individual performance is encouraged to dazzle the audience. After his triumph playing Tartuffe, Anthony Sher takes the stage as Tartuffe's creator **Molière** – a case of Sher and Sher alike. A play largely set in a theatre invites the public but must perform in private too. A passerby is a potential informer, and truth (as in Molière's desperate futile cry, 'The King is a tyrant!,' to which his terrified servant replies, 'You're a great man but I'd just wish you'd shut up!') is a perilous indulgence.

Bill Alexander directs with panache on Koltai's expansive two-level set and makes the most of the comic opportunities presented by Dusty Hughes' translation. Crucial encounters – interrogations, seductions, duels – often dissolve into farce, yet we're theatrical performances, which he and the rest of the cast seem only too happy to provide.

Bulgakov wrote *Molière* in the early 1930s, not the most promising time for playwrights in Stalinist Russia. After four years in rehearsal the play received seven performances in 1936 and was then taken off. I'm surprised it was ever performed at all, for although the ostensible setting is the France of Louis XIV, it takes little imagination to spot the analogy with Bulgakov's Russia. Molière, the greatest actor and playwright of his time, is entirely dependent on the King's favour. He sails close to the wind with *Tartuffe* and earns the Church's hatred, but Louis indulges him. Unfortunately a fellow actor, dismissed by Molière for seducing his wife, takes revenge by denouncing Molière for immorality. The Church unscrupulously engineers Molière's fall from favour.

Since the play is constructed in short scenes, Sher has to flesh out the character of Molière in a series of vignettes and he is brilliantly successful. With his fellow actors he bustles and backslaps; with the king he fawns and nervously simpers. It's a virtuoso performance, with quicksilver shifts of vocal style and physical movement. Theres a nicely languid Sun King from John Carlisle and a fiercely attractive Armande (Mrs Molière) from Sara Mair-Thomas. The entire cast richly overacts, but then role-playing is demanded of them all. They are on show to left in no doubt that behind the high spirits of the play is a world that is autocratic, vicious and dangerous to inhabit.

No need to phone for the Whitehouse. Howard Brenton's new play **The Genius** will not offend the eye though it does abuse the ear. Trevor Eve, clenched fists by his side, clad in a black suit, and looking altogether like a statue of a Bulgarian hero, rants his way through the ungratifying role of Leo, an American Nobel Prize-winning mathematician who is mysteriously exiled to a Midlands university. 'A prickly little shit', the Vice-Chancellor (played by Clive Swift as a shrewd retired colonel) calls Leo, and takes the words right out of my mouth. Leo creates havoc, warping young minds, borrowing wives, serving urine at garden parties and involving both MI5 and the Kremlin in a tug-of-war for the formulae he's devised that are essential to building a new superbomb. Both play and actors lack conviction. Characterization lapses into caricature, and the issues raised by the play – the moral status of and responsibility for dangerous research, and the limits to which 'genius' is morally entitled to go to achieve its dubious ends – neither cohere nor confound in a stirring way. □

## ART
John Spurling

# Dog years

**Georg Baselitz: Paintings 1960-83**
*Whitechapel, until 30 October, then Amsterdam and Basel.*
**A Timeless Journey: Tristram Hillier** *RA, until 18 September, then Hull and Preston.*

Georg Kern's *nom de brosse* is taken, like Michelangelo Merisi's, from his birthplace. Apart from the fact that he was expelled from his East Berlin art school for 'socio-political immaturity', I've read nothing to suggest that Kern/Baselitz is in real life the kind of dangerous hoodlum that Merisi/Caravaggio was; nevertheless, the image he has projected since he first came before the public in 1961 with an exhibition called 'Pandemonium' has been consistently violent. He began with Artaud-like statements and Art Brut-style paintings and has progressed via influences from Pollock and Guston, Northern Mannerism and German Expressionism – keeping always to the mean side of the street – until arriving at international notoriety as the man who paints everything wrong way up.

His upside-down paintings actually date from 1969, but it has taken the museum curators' change of taste in the Eighties to bring him out of the woodwork. Which is only fitting, because although one might read his violence as being understandably German (how classically or optimistically would you paint if you'd been born in Saxony in 1938?) it has always been specifically addressed to the art-world and the museums that sustain it. Baselitz disclaims any social or political role and even any need to show his work: 'there is no communication with any public whatsoever. The artist can ask no questions, and he makes no statement; he offers no information, message or opinion.' The work comes from the artist's head and is painted only for the artist, so if museums and galleries persist in hanging his work, as they increasingly do, no one should imagine that he can interpret what he sees: art 'cannot be used for anything else than looking at'.

This is a familiar sort of snarl (one is not surprised to learn that Baselitz keeps Dobermanns), and the natural response is that the recent stuff Baselitz puts on the walls (or other people put there for him) doesn't bear much looking at. The canvases are mostly very large, devoted to single crudely-drawn figures and filled out with gup – that's to say messed-about paint in squiggles, blotches, cataracts and sometimes more or less abstract shapes, roughly suggesting windows, doors, floor-lines or table-tops. The figures, even if they were not hanging like bats, would be conveying agony of one sort or another – greed, drunkenness, misery, terror, despair – but only to the extent that graffiti convey such emotions; in so far as these scribbles represent people, they are people seen from a long way off, people suffering abstract agonies.

Yet back in the Sixties when the chief international fashion was for uncompromising abstraction, Baselitz was working in quite another direction. His figures then were recognisably refugees from Social Realism, touchingly open-faced characters of robust physique wearily posed in discarded battledress against ruined landscapes and painted in colours that suggested a rainbow washed in mud. His most memorable work to date (done in 1980 and shown on a previous occasion at the Whitechapel) is a large rough carving in wood of a seated Hitlerian figure giving the Nazi salute. I would suggest on the strength of it and of his Sixties paintings that the sooner Baselitz forgets his quarrel with the museums and his insistence on art for the artist's sake, the better. He is not an abstract painter at all, but a political one – in the true sense of being stirred by the tokens and effects of politics rather than in the narrower party-propaganda sense. Violence is indeed his métier, but it is wasted on the art-world.

If, as I suspect, the Baselitz behind the snarl is really a steady, organised person (he is, after all, a professor in West Berlin), then he makes a perfect foil to Tristram Hillier, whose paintings are the epitome of stasis and control but whose life, according to Nicholas Usherwood's catalogue introduction, 'was volatile and hedonistic to say the least'. Hillier died earlier this year at the age of 78. His RA retrospective shows him to have been essentially a still-life painter for whom the influence of Surrealism was crucial. Most artists who embraced Surrealism did so because they wanted to escape into the thrills of the unconscious; Hillier on the contrary used it as a means of pinning down the butterfly world of ordinary appearances. Seas, skies, cliffs, towns, natural or man-made objects, even a Somerset lane, are brought to order and relieved of their capacity to disturb by this sovereign concoction of razor-sharp outlines, frozen light and shadow, foreground enlargement. People he couldn't cope with at all, either as portraits or as staffage for his landscapes. Perhaps the most remarkable painting in the show is of



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the bottles of astounding vintage drunk at a party to celebrate André Simon's 80th birthday in 1957. Dom Pérignon 1943, Château Latour 1934, Château Haut Brion 1920, Mouton Rothschild 1877, Hennessy 1913 – all corkless and spent, but none upside down. There's violence and volatility for you, recollected and painted into tranquillity. □

## TELEVISION
Hugo Williams

# Wane bears

WHEN ERIC MORECAMBE was asked who he would like to have been if he hadn't been an entertainer, he replied without hesitation, 'Des O'Connor'. The boot may be on the other foot now that the new **Morecambe and Wise Show** (ITV) faces jokeruptcy and the dimpled twit is to have his own chat show (*Des O'Connor Tonight*, ITV, November). 'I shall be talking seriously to top politicians, union leaders and industry chiefs', says Des. 'Also Koo Stark.' On his successful Australian show he talked to a man who had tried to commit suicide four times and he plans to repeat this kind of thing. Who people would like to have been if they hadn't been people on chat shows would make fine bedtime viewing. O'Connor plans to have the Three Popeyes on the show – Scargill, Livingstone and Benn. I would enjoy hearing what kind of careers these entertainers might have had in, say, politics.

Among the last to be let loose on the **Comic Roots** series (BBC1) were Alexei Sayle and Kenneth Williams. Sayle went looking for his on all-fours, sniffing like a truffle-pig all the way to the Liverpool bar he frequented at that age: 'You've heard of young, gifted and black. I was short, fat and Jewish'. He showed us the park where drinkers used to recite ' 'avn't gurde poitry'. His pronunciation of the phrase said everything about his peculiar relish for such art forms.

From the Tay Bridge Disaster Tea Room, it was down to London for the career. 'I was paying £7 a week to live in the drip tray of a fridge. A friend was paying £8 and he was living in Rugby. Fourteen pints of lager and me hat please, John.' (Cue for assault on 'cockney humour'.) 'I'm more sophisticated nowadays I go to wane bears (wine bars).'

After having himself thrown out of Stringfellow's mirrortheque he proceeded to barrack himself in The Comedy Store. It was the nearest we got to those tender comic roots: 'I used to go round at school with a sawn-off shotgun in me mouth saying "Look, chaps, I'm gonna blow me head off".' Ah, but did he really?

Kenneth Williams was more literal in his research. His camera lingered long on the King's Cross tenement where he and his brand of perky single entendre had their birth: 'I can't do that with it Mrs, I've got a 2d cucumber up there already.' I listened enthralled to his story of the sick relative who lay in her own shit for days until young Williams went round for a visit. 'There's 2/11 on the side for a new pair of bloomers', she told him. When he came back and offered to clean up she said no, he was to make himself at home. Then she sat down at the piano to entertain the boy. How kind. This was avant-garde if you like, but it slipped down like honey flavoured with Williams's familiar company. The good old Music Hall was likewise bathed in a greenish light under Williams's fevered memory. 'She stuck her stilletta where he'll never forget her', he crooned fondly, then quoted Shelley: 'We are a portion of everything we ever loved.'

It was sad to see the end of *Comic Roots*, but how about a *Tragic Roots* as a follow-up? Politicians and trade unionists should take naturally to the format, which would offer a complete moratorium on self-pity. Also military types like Willie Whitelaw and the Duke of Edinburgh, and shaky sons of the famous like Winston Churchill and Auberon Waugh.

What a fine idea it was of Mike Sharland's (**Hollywood Hits Chiswick,** C4) to have W. C. Fields tire of heaven and come back to look for his roots at the Chiswick Empire, scene of his first stage triumphs as top-of-the-bill juggler. Even better to have him turn up in the supermarket that now stands there 'replacing live variety with dead vegetables'. 'Mind if I go and look at the No 1 dressing room?' he asked a baffled shopgirl. Fields left home at 11, slept out and went to jail. He got the famous nose street-fighting, not drinking. 'Juggling was my only asset; it never let me down.' 'The juggler was outstanding', said the *NY Times* the year Fields hit the city. From Ziegfeld's Follies he went into movies. 'A few drinks made my life less frightening', he, or Sharland, told us. But 'I need dreams' he told the shopgirl as he combed the drink shelves.

We saw him making the grass-skirt-cutting still with the model who became his despairing mistress: 'There's nothing wrong with me that buying a distillery wouldn't cure', he told her, dying of pneumonia and drink. Sharland avoided the chestnuts about snakes and Philadelphia in favour of plausible fictions. Juggling was a recurring obsession, so it was natural to have Fields go to pieces only when his hands did: 'God damn this whole frigging world.' □


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Essex
Was not the model for Hardy's Wessex
Of course. It
Was Dorset.

Lancs
Makes cotton hanks;
Yorks
Forks.

PETER NORMAN

In Cheshire
There is particular pressure
On photographees
To say 'Cheese'.

JAMES D. FRAIL

Devon
Used to be heaven,
But can it survive
The M5?

STANLEY J. SHARPLESS

I once went
To Gwent
But
It was shut.

V. ERNEST COX

Essex
Ethics
Make debates very tricky
In Billericay.

D. A. PRINCE

In Connecticut
It's considered good etiquette
To discuss your tax bracket
And wear a plaid jacket.

JOAN VAN POZNAK

Arkansas
Is a bas;
It's Tedium with a capital T
As far as Ikanses.

BILL GREENWELL

Y'all don't get lippy
If you're black in Mississippi.
If you don't aim to be strange fruit
Don't get cute.

KEN RUDGE

The inhabitants of California
Are a damn sight hornier
Than the folks in Maine,
Who think high and live plain.

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# FIRST PERSON

Anna Coote

## All you need is balls

I'M INDEBTED to the *Observer* for its report of a recent speech by Mr Frank Chapple, from which we learned why the Chairman of the TUC considers Mr Neil Kinnock a suitable candidate for the Labour leadership. 'It is possible', said Mr Chapple, 'that Kinnock can put the party right. He's got balls.'

Now it is probably true that Mr Kinnock has balls. I have met him once or twice and, although they weren't immediately obvious to me, I can't recall any evidence to the contrary. As a matter of fact I'd have said the same about Mr Hattersley, Mr Heffer and Mr Shore, but Mr Chapple seems to think otherwise. How did he find out? Was it on the agenda in some smoke-filled room? (Item One: Candidates for Labour Leadership. (i) Position on nationalisation; (ii) Attitude to trade union reform; (iii) Verification of testicles; (iv) Policy on Europe . . .)

Balls Mr Kinnock may have, but should it be the clincher in this mighty contest? Can Mr Chapple tell us anything else about Mr Kinnock? What does he have between the ears, for example? Not balls, I hope.

Certainly balls are an important qualification for most top jobs. So far, no one has managed to lead the Labour Party without them. There is a great preponderance of them on the General Council of the TUC. And in that great ball park at Westminster, there's an alarmingly high proportion of them. You need balls to be an editor in Fleet Street. You need balls to wield power in the City or in Whitehall. You need balls to be a vicar and (almost always) balls to be a judge. You don't need balls to be a Prime Minister any more, but you need to give a strong *impression* of having them. Frank Chapple would probably say Mrs Thatcher has balls.

Adam Raphael and Robert Taylor of the *Observer*, who reported Mr Chapple's speech, went on without batting an eyelid to cite examples of what Mr Chapple believed to be signs of Mr Kinnock's courage. The connection gave them no trouble at all. I had more difficulty. There they sat at the end of the paragraph: Mr Kinnock's balls, couched in the esteem of Mr Chapple . . . and I could not read past them. They simply would not turn themselves into a metaphor for me.

Political courage is something I admire and I hope the next Labour leader has plenty of it. But try as I might I cannot link it up in my imagination with those anatomical details which I do not possess myself, but which I have so often regarded with affection and amusement. It is seldom that I stop to think about them, but now Mr Chapple has driven me to it. I wouldn't go so far as to say I take them for granted, but there is a kind of inevitability about them, so that one is unlikely to find oneself stopped dead in one's tracks, exclaiming: 'Christ, look at that! *Balls!*' Their demeanour is unsuggestive. Whatever they are like – soft furry ones, long dangly ones, firm round ones like a pair of gobstoppers gone down the wrong way; small, medium, large – they don't really move the soul to poetry.

By comparison, the breast is a rich source of allusion. It nourishes, comforts, cares. If any feature of the human form deserves to stand as a metaphor for a political asset, it is surely the breast. (Let's hear it for the breast, ladies and gentlemen! A big hand now . . .) But which union leader is going to complain: 'Trouble with Kinnock is, he's got no tits'? Or alternatively, 'Kinnock's our man, he's got breasts'?

I suppose the vulnerability of balls lends them a certain poignancy – and perhaps this is the source of the metaphor. To hang them just *there*, so painfully accessible to the hostile knee or boot, the stray cricket ball, the boisterous child, the unnoticed desk-top corner – and, not least, the disrespectful female eye – must have taken a huge amount of courage. Sheer cowardice, by contrast, to pack away the female organs, discreet and carefully cushioned out of sight: *they* do not brave the world as if to say: 'Well here we are, like us or lump us.' By standing their ground in the face of almost overwhelming odds, balls could be construed as the very embodiment of courage.

Yet the metaphor seems to be schizophrenic. Frank Chapple might say in one breath that Neil Kinnock *has* balls and, in the next, that Roy Hattersley or Eric Heffer or Peter Shore *talks* balls. To possess is to succeed; to express (especially in loads) is to fail miserably. How can it be that men are prepared to enlist their own, vulnerable organs in the service of such an unflattering figure of speech? Is there a hint of self-mockery here? A little self-deprecating skirmish, to let on that they don't take themselves altogether seriously?

I think not. After all, a person who doesn't have balls – in the literal sense – commits a gruesome offence in mocking them; why, then, should a person who *does* have them – again, literally – want to give hostages to fortune by mocking them himself? Surely the second metaphor is just a mirror-image of the first. X makes a statement; Y retorts: 'That's balls!' It's an act of insolence, a challenge . . . not unlike the anatomical arrangement of the organs themselves. 'You think we look ridiculous hanging here? Balls to you!' In a sense, it takes balls to say that. □

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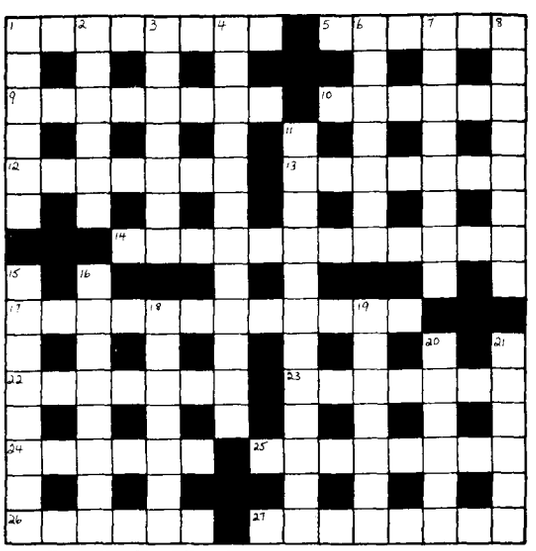

ACROSS

1 Hear bits translated by a linguist (8)
5 Princess made free with what a princess wears (6)
9 If this knight lost his weapon, that would be his fate (8)
10 It never stops but needs rest before morning (6)
12 Something hard which is a cause of restraint to an insect (7)
13 Once love is involved a playwright is needed (7)
14 Mean that hell is distorted by sanity (6, 6)
17 Craftsmen who sound as if they put prosperity before their dues (12)
22 Greenery which enables one to have a smoke in shelter (7)
23 The bird has a turn to throw (7)
24 Fired covering me in back street (6)
25 Minced beef nice since it is living (8)
26 A religious belief exists among people who are objective (6)
27 Scoffs about a king being seen in shoes (8)

DOWN

1 Where men hold everything up (6)
2 Prevent a Scot being lightweight (6)
3 Mean to declare before time (7)
4 These are made up by writers spending a second among little men in politics (5, 7)
6 The earnest go east in numbers (7)
7 Smartly the less dry one is when changing (8)
8 Large creatures married to morning insects (8)
11 About time there is wild revelling where country folk gather (7, 5)
15 Grandest star in the street (8)
16 Guided back to the conscious state (8)
18 For sale all over the place although they don't work very well (7)
19 Password which shows a girl is on time (7)
20 It shows a likeness, catching one in an amused expression (6)
21 Settles in fluid grease (6)

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**Joan Nightingale, Black Country Co-operative Development Agency, Lich Chambers, 44 Queen Square, Wolverhampton. Tel. (0902) 773506 (anytime).**

## AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL BRITISH SECTION
## HEAD OF ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE

Amnesty International is an international human rights organisation. The British Section is the campaigning arm in the UK. The Section seeks a person experienced in administration, financial management (overseeing a budget of £500,000), and computer technology to head a team of paid and volunteer staff and to carry out assignments both as a team and on an individual basis. The successful candidate will be expected to ensure the efficient business life of the Section and the introduction of computerisation of programmes and finance.

Candidates should have proven administrative ability and possess a relevant degree/professional qualification. Motivation, drive, and a capacity for hard work essential!

**Salary: £9,500-£12,000 depending on experience and qualifications.**

**Further details: Di Weston**
**Amnesty International, 5 Robert's Place**
**London EC1 OEJ. Telephone: 01-251 8371**

## WORKCAMPS ADMINISTRATOR
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to assist in bringing international groups of volunteers together with local people for workcamps of a few weeks, to contribute to self-help projects in rural and urban Swaziland. Organisation and administrative experience together with a commitment to workcamping.
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**Write for details, including a short c.v. and s.a.e., to: International Voluntary Service, NS7, 53 Regent Road, Leicester LE1 6YL.**

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**ROYAL SHAKESPEARE COMPANY.** 01-628 8795, cc 01-638 8891, 24hr info 01-628 2295. Few day seats £4 from 10 a.m. S. Booking open for new season 12 Oct.-28 Jan.: BARBICAN THEATRE – 'MAYDAYS' by David Edgar joins 'THE TEMPEST', 'MACBETH', & 'MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING' in repertoire. From 17 Dec. 'PETER PAN'. THE PIT . 'THE CUSTOM OF THE COUNTRY' by Nicholas Wright in repertoire with Bulgakov's 'MOLIERE', 'ARDEN OF FAVERSHAM' Bond's 'LEAR'.

**THEATRE GOERS** please note: cc – Credit cards; S – Student standby.

# GROUPS/MEETINGS

**CENTRAL LONDON FABIAN SOCIETY.** Wednesday 21 September, 7.30pm. Room Two, Mary Ward House, 5 Tavistock Place, London WC1, Stephen Benn on 'ILEA and the Tory Threat'. All welcome.

**THEOSOPHY.** S.a.e. for free pamphlets, book list, programme of activities. Sunday, 18 Sept., 8 p.m. Informal Q/A Meeting. 'What is Theosophy?' ULT, 62 Queen's Gdns, London W2 3AL.

Conference for Trade Unionists on
**THE DEMOCRATIC CONTROL OF THE LONDON POLICE**
**Saturday, 24 September, 1983 at 10 a.m.**
Please apply for credentials to:
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# BOOKS/ PUBLICATIONS

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Fees will be approximately £335 a year. A small number of bursaries may be available.

Enquiries and applications should be sent as soon as possible to:
**P. Seglow, Department of Sociology, Brunel University Uxbridge, Middlesex UB8 3PH**

# LISTINGS

## FRI 16 SEPTEMBER

**LEEDS** Equality & Inequalities in Modern France. Residential conf at Univ of Leeds. **Details D. S. Bell, Dept of Politics, Univ of Leeds.**

**LONDON** Picket of British Aerospace Head Office, Pall Mall, W1, 12-2pm. **Org London Peace Action. Details Ann 01-633 0133 x 22/Keith 01-622 8426 (eves).**

## SAT 17 SEPTEMBER

**LONDON** Socialist Economic Review – 4th Annual Conf. Debates incl Thatcher's Monetarism; Women and Housing. Registration 10-11am, Room 152 County Hall, York Rd, SE1. £5/£2 unwaged. **Details and creche bkings 01-340 9823.**

**LONDON** March, rally, demo for Palestine. Assemble 1.15pm, Temple Gdns. National and international spkrs at Hyde Park, 3pm. **Org Sabra & Shatilla First Anniversary Committee. Also Glasgow** Sabra/Shatila commemorative march & rally. Assemble Blythswood Sq, 12.00, march off 12.30 to Custom House Quay, PLO labour movement spkrs. **Org West of Scotland Friends of Palestine.**

**LONDON** It can't happen again! – Labour's return. Local discn conf 10am-4.15pm, Brabant Road Community Centre, 2a Brabant Road, Wood Green, N22. Creche. Adm free. **Org Hornsey & Wood Green CLP. Details Geoff Sheridan 01-703 5298 (day).**

**GLASGOW** Labour's future after the general election. Spkrs Tony Benn, Michael Meacher MP, Dennis Canavan MP. 10.15am, Glasgow Film Theatre. **Org LCC Scotland.**

**GLASGOW** Working Conference called by Polish Solidarity Committee to discuss Democratic forms of social organisation in Czechoslovakia 1968 and Poland 1980-81; The peace movements in Eastern Europe; 'Situation of women in Eastern Europe'; Developing solidarity with the people of Eastern Europe. **Details Gordon Morgan, 59 Durward Ave, Glasgow G41 041-649 8958.**

**LONDON** Socialist Society Summer School. 'No Turning Back' at County Hall, SE1. Workshops on extra-parliamentary democracy – local and industrial resistance, the future of the Left and socialist internationalism. **Details 9 Poland St W1 01-734 8501.**

## SUN 18 SEPTEMBER

**LONDON** Peter Hain will discuss his new book 'The Democratic Alternative', 3pm, Response Bookshop, 300 Old Brompton Road, SW5. Adm free.

**LONDON** Hyam Maccoby and Dan Jacobson on 'The Chosen People in the Jewish Tradition'. 8pm, 37 Broadhurst Gdns, NW6. **Org MAPAM 01-328 2554.**

**LONDON** Labour Campaign for Gay Rights meeting. 6pm, Marchmont Community Centre, Marchmont Street, WC1. **Contact Mike Haran 01-659 2938. National Office and membership, 21 Devonshire Promenade, Fenton, Nottingham.**

**LONDON** 'Leg it against the bomb' 10 mile sponsored slog for CND around Hyde Park from 11am at Holland Park, 4pm-5pm decorated legs comp. Find sponsors. **Forms available from CND, 11 Goodwin St, N4 3HQ Carol Freeman 01-263 0977.**

## MON 19 SEPTEMBER

**LONDON** Defence without the Bomb. Meeting with Michael Randle of Alternative Defence Commission. 7.30pm, Junction Resource Centre, 248 Lavender Hill (above Fads), SW11. Adm free. **Org Battersea CND.**

## WED 21 SEPTEMBER

**LONDON** International Perspective – 'North-South: Mutual Suicide?'. Spkr Frank Judd, Director Voluntary Service Overseas. 6.30pm, St James's, Piccadilly. **Org Dunamis, 197 Piccadilly, W1. 01-437 6851.**

**LONDON** Images of Science and Progress – a series of seminars exploring issues in the representation of science and technology in TV, film, literature and politics. Brian Easlea, University of Sussex 'Masculinity, misogyny and science – connections and consequences'. 7.30pm, Dept of Social and Economic Studies, Imperial College, 53 Princes Gate, SW7. **Details 01-589 5111 Ext 1019.**

## THURS 22 SEPTEMBER

**LONDON** 'The New Cold War: USA-USSR Superpower relations and nuclear weapons' course from 7-9pm at Goldsmiths College, Lewisham Way, New Cross, SE14. £8/£1 unwaged. **Details 01-692 7171.**

**LONDON** Open forum on Rail Transport of Nuclear Waste through West London. Spkrs from NUR, GLC, CND. Exhibition, refreshments. Adm free. 7.30pm, Blythe Neighbourhood Centre, The Hall, 50 Milson Rd, W14. **Disabled access please phone David Drabble 01-603 5869.**

**LONDON** 'Sexuality and Self-identity in Feminist Politics: Past and Present', first of 24-week course. 6.30pm, 42 Queen Square, WC1. Tutors: Sally Alexander and Barbara Taylor. **Details 01-828 3735.**

**LONDON** 'British "justice" in Ireland' – shoot to kill: Diplock courts: informers. Public meeting, 7.30pm, Lambeth Town Hall. **Org South London Irish Solidarity Committee.**

## FORTHCOMING

**23 SEPT Oxford** Conf: 'Information and nuclear issues – the role of the academic'. All welcome. **Details & booking: Nigel Gardner 0865 241085/241791.**

**23-25 SEPT Bristol** 'Politics and the Locality'. Wkend Conf. **Org Dept of Extra-Mural Studies, University of Bristol in assoc with The Politics Assoc.**

**23-25 SEPT Keele** '14-18: The New Vocationalism in School and Further Education'. ATSS Annual Conf at The University of Keele, Staffs. **Details: D. Glasson 0782 621111 Extn 299. Org Assoc for the Teaching of Social Science.**

**23-25 SEPT Birmingham** Campaign Strategy Weekend Org West Midlands CND. St Francis Hall Birmingham University. Accommodation available (bring sleeping bag). £9 first come/first served. **Details and booking 54 Allison St, Digbeth, Birmingham. 021-632 6909.**

**23-25 SEPT Sheffield** International Conference: 'A Socialist Framework for Europe and Democratic Socialists in the Peace Movement' Sheffield University. **Details Rosemary Ross, 21 Connaught Road, Harpenden, Herts. 05827 5399. Org International Foundation Left Europe.**

**23-25 SEPT Canterbury** Sixth National Conf 1983 of the Association for the Teaching of Caribbean, African and Asian Literature. Theme: Childhood. Spkrs, workshops, disco. Adm £48 residents/£30 non-residents/£7.50 per day (£15 for weekend), non-resident. **Details Vicky Unwin 01-637 3311 (day)/01-960 7887 (eves).**

**24 SEPT Stirling** Meeting to discuss launch of new monthly paper of the Left in Scotland, 'Scottish Socialist'. 12-5pm Cowane Centre. **Details Jean Mackenzie, 59 Durward Avenue, Glasgow G41 041-649 8958.**

**24 SEPT London** Open University CND day school, 11am Parsifal College, Finchley Road. Spkrs, Workshops, films. Accom available. **Details Chris Wharton, 76 Hackness Road, Scarborough.**

**24 SEPT Leicester** 'Childbirth Today'. Michel Odent – pioneer of active birth in France. 10-12.30pm, £5. **Org Leicester Active Birth Conf, 9 Cross Green, Rothley, Leicester. 0533 374285. ALSO 3pm at Ivanhoe College, Ashby.**

**25 SEPT London** Sixth Waltham Forest Festival for Racial Harmony. Musicians, dance & drama groups, stalls. National or fancy dress. 1.30-5.30pm, Lloyd Park, Forest Road, E17. Adm free. **Org Waltham Forest Campaign Against Racialism. Details 01-558 1992.**

**26 SEPT London** Inaugural meeting West London LCC. Spkr Peter Hain. 7.30pm, Bishop Creighton House, 378 Lillie Road, SW6. **Details David Ward 01-836 3672 (day)/01-736 9614 (eves).**

**5 OCT Brighton** END fringe meeting at Labour Party conf: 'A disarmament strategy for European socialist parties' with Mary Kaldor, Robin Cook MP, Mo Mowlam. 5.30pm, Royal Albion Hotel, Old Steine. **Org END 01-272 1236.**

**11 OCT London** Public meeting about closure of Highgate Wing, Whittington Hospital. Spkrs incl Jeremy Corbyn MP, Michael Meacher MP, Caroline Osborn (Islington CHC), Syed Boukhari (COHSE). 7.30pm, Upstairs meeting room, Caxton House, St Johns Way, N19. **Org Socialist Health Association London Branch. Details Judy Atkinson 01-736 5120/Clive Boutle 01-444 6254.**

*Sorry, but we can't accept entries over the phone. Entries must be received by Friday preceding issue date. We reserve the right to exclude items without giving reasons and are not responsible for errors. Space is strictly limited so if you definitely want your item to appear, we suggest you book it as an ad. under the appropriate classified heading. See main heading for rates, etc.*



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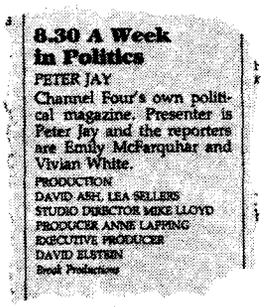

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